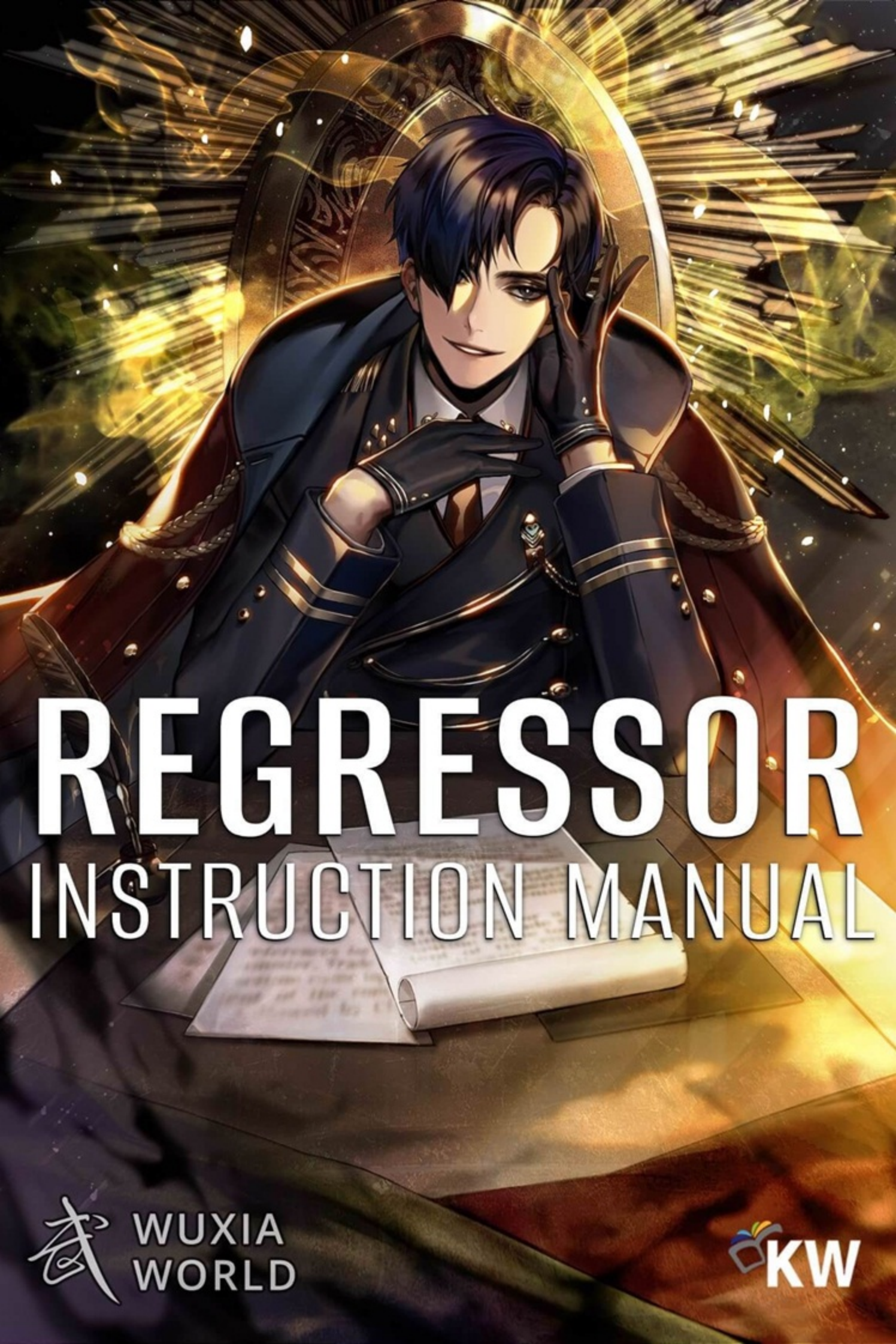
REGRESSOR
INSTRUCTION MANUAL
WUXIA WORLD
KW

REGRESSOR INSTRUCTION MANUAL

– 회귀자 사용설명서 –

- VOLUME 16 -

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[WUXIAWORLD]

CHAPTER 751
TO THE END (9)

I[1] wasn’t sure how to describe this moment other than it was a joyous moment. This sense of elation that I once felt before filled me up. This vast battlefield was made just for me, and I felt a rush of pleasure run down my spine when I realized that the puzzle pieces were falling into place.

Truthfully, I had never really thought of battles as something special. Well, it would be more accurate to say that I didn’t really think much about it because how could I consider battles as something when they offered nothing else but screams, sweat, and blood? I would always feel exhausted, and the fear of death would always fill my heart whenever I was in battle. I would also always have trouble sleeping the night before a war out of anxiety.

Of course, there were people different from me. The Mercenary Queen is a great example of that. She enjoyed battles in both her lives, and I wasn't trying to say that she was the type of person who would get intoxicated by the smell of blood and run rampant because of that. Cha Hee-Ra, the guild master of the Red Mercenary Guild, definitely found battles as something pleasurable. Of course, I couldn't really say for sure as we had never really been on the same battlefield. In other words, her real emotions could be different from my mere assumptions.

I feel like everything was connected systematically. The moment I flew into the air, I felt the distinct and unique aura of a Dragon Breath, but I didn’t bother looking away because I knew that it was going to brush past me. As expected, it brushed past me and wiped out the angels in front of me.

The Dragon Breath created space that I thought wasn’t possible in this situation, but I didn't head in that direction, as my destination wasn't located there.

And that was when I saw an even larger space above me…

I immediately flapped my wings, and I felt like I was driving on an empty freeway. I was swinging my sword without thinking much, and if I were to exaggerate a bit, it felt like the enemy was showing their vital points to me.

I was the only one who had survived the light and spells falling from all directions.

'This is… '

New…

The battlefield felt like everything was orchestrated for my sake, and it was such a new feeling that I couldn't have imagined feeling this way.

'This is fun.'

I found it ironic that I found joy in a battlefield I despised so much, but it couldn't be helped because there was something joyous about battles themselves. If I were to nitpick, then it would be…

'Is Lee Ki-Young okay?'

There was definitely something amiss.

'Shouldn't he just stop now?'

He never really cared about his health, so of course, I was worried about him.

I bit my lips when I imagined him standing before me with his emaciated frame and bleeding nose.

'It must be a burden to him.'

After all, he was receiving an immense amount of data—immense enough to overload any computer out there. I had never heard of nor seen anyone controlling a battlefield as if they could see the future. It was a great accomplishment for a mere human being.

Of course, I knew he was special, but…

There was a high chance that his health was being affected, as he wasn't in the best condition even before the war. I was sure he had already reached his limits at this point.

'I should make him stop.'

I thought about leaving him alone as fast as possible, but my body and soul wanted to keep chasing after this sublime feeling.

'I have to make him stop… '

Would that be useful to this war?

'Can I stop him?'

Could we put an end to this war without him?

"It's… definitely impossible…" I mumbled.

I wasn't trying to justify so that I could keep feeling this sublime feeling. I wasn't exaggerating when I said that it was impossible to end this war without Mr. Ki-Young.

Without him, how would I know where to go and where to attack? The battlefield was extremely vast, as it was the northern region. I had a lot of experience under my belt, but I wouldn't know what geniuses were thinking while they were staring at a battlefield.

I wouldn't understand what Mr. Ki-Young was thinking while he was staring at the battlefield.

Mr. Ki-Young had always made reasonable decisions. He wasn't the type to make mistakes or errors when it mattered, and he was a perfectionist as well. He knew better than anyone the best way to use me as a resource. I could defeat the angels around me, but we would lose the war without Mr. Ki-Young.

'It can't be helped.'

I was starting to become a bit greedy. I needed more of him.

'More… more.'

I spread my wings and swung my sword.

'More… more!'

I had just landed, but I didn't stop moving.

“Affirmative.”

I raised my arm to block the spear that was flying from my left.

‘More… I can do more. More.’

“Affirmative.”

My scenery peeled away, and it was changing so fast that I couldn't look at the battlefield properly.

‘I can do even more things.’

I was moving so fast that my eyes couldn't follow my own speed, but it didn’t matter.

I had someone else serving as my eyes, after all.

“Affirmative.”

When I decided to catch my breath, I felt someone casting a recovery spell upon me almost immediately. It felt like a stamina recovery spell was also cast upon me, but it didn’t feel like I was lacking stamina because it wasn’t like I was breathing in ragged pants.

My muscles were screaming in pain, but I wasn’t feeling tired. It felt like adrenaline was rushing through me, and I couldn't get enough of the sublime feeling of being in the zone.

I felt a refreshing breeze hitting my face, and even being out of breath felt good to me.

‘I can keep going.’

I could become even faster and more perceptive. I felt like I wouldn’t get tired, and I felt like I could fight all day. My body and soul felt like it was extremely thirsty, and this battlefield was water. I wanted to stay here indefinitely.

‘I can keep moving.’

However, I didn’t get any more quests.

‘I can move a little faster.’

But I didn’t get any orders. Why? Had he reached his limits? I was sure that was the case. Mr. Ki-Young knew what I was capable of and the minute details of my movements. He was perfectly aware of what I could do on the battlefield, so perhaps…

‘He's probably thinking that I can't handle my current pace.’

I couldn’t tell exactly what I was feeling. I couldn’t think about anything else because I was too busy swinging my sword and moving around. The battle was long, so he probably thought that I would get exhausted sooner rather than later.

‘I think I can keep going.’

Actually, he was right.

The right thing to do here was to adjust my pace to manage my stamina. However, I didn't really think that it was a bad idea to keep this pace and momentum going. I wanted to tell him that I was fine, but I couldn't do it because I was afraid that I might end up making him feel burdened.

I wasn't receiving any orders anymore, but I decided to start moving once more. I was sure he'd think that I still had a ton of energy left, but I still didn't receive any orders, even though I had been moving on my own for a few minutes now.

At this point, I had to say something. I wasn't trying to increase my on-field time on the battlefield to keep on feeling that sublime feeling; I just had to say something, as ending this war as soon as possible was the right thing to do.

“I’ll go a little faster,” I said.

-…

He was quiet.

‘He probably thinks it’s impossible… ’

He was probably thinking that I had already reached my limits.

‘I can keep going, though… ’

I had to show him that this wasn’t the end of me.

He wasn't responding to me, and I started having mixed feelings because I felt like what I was doing wouldn't be enough to convince him. The sudden sense of shame made me tighten my grip on my sword.

“*Uh…*”

The change was slow, but it happened unexpectedly.

The first thing that changed was my eyes.

“W-What… in the world…?”

It felt like I was looking at the world through the eyes of an insect.

I touched my left eye because it was radiating pain, but the pain soon went away. I saw scenes that weren't in front of me. I could see multiple fights, and they were all throughout the battlefield. The sudden rush of information made my head feel like it was going to split open, and it was then that I understood things.

I understood the true strength of the angel before me, the status of the battlefield, and what I had to do right now. I spread my wings, and that sublime feeling disappeared, only to be immediately replaced by a brand-new feeling.

Dogs were capable of sniffing out tens of thousands of information, and I could probably do the same right now. I could feel everything—the enemy's breathing pattern, the condition of the allied troops, the cold floor and the strong smell of rust in the air, the flow of the air around me, and the fluttering of my hair on my skin.

All these were brand-new feelings to me, but the feeling that stuck out the most to me was…

“*Haha.*”

The feeling of being connected to Mr. Ki-Young.

“*Ha… hahaha!*”

I wasn't certain, but I could tell we were connected. I was sure Mr. Ki-Young felt the same way. Like partners on the battlefield, I was sure he was aware of my breathing pattern and condition. I knew he was watching my back, front, and flanks, so I immediately took out the receiver in my ear because I didn't need it anymore.

He had finally acknowledged me. I could finally stand beside him, but that feeling didn't last long because my legs started shaking, and I had to calm myself down.

- Are you okay?

"Yes, I'm fine," I answered.

It felt like the question had echoed in my mind rather than in my ear.

- Are you really okay?

I grabbed my head with one hand while swinging my sword. I wasn't used to this painful headache, and my left eye, which I thought had gotten better, was still throbbing painfully.

'Why… '

I thought I finally knew why this genius was being considerate of me.

'Kim Hyun-Sung, Kim Hyun-Sung, you idiot. You incompetent fool! Know your place… '

I finally knew why he didn't say such words to me.

- You don't have to push yourself. It looks like it's still not enough. It's kind of unfortunate, though…

"No, I'm fine. I'm okay. I can handle it," I told him.

- I'll keep an eye on your condition.

"I-I'm fine," I stuttered.

- You can tell me anytime you're feeling tired. Don't push yourself.

"I can… do this all day," I said.

- In that case… I'll establish the connection.

'We haven't… connected yet?'

- From now on, I will no longer send coordinates or explain things to you because you will be able to feel it.

"Yes, I can feel it," I answered.

- Then…

"Yes?"

- Do as you wish.

"…"

- What are you doing? Move.

I smiled the moment I took my hand off of my eye. I was smiling because a completely new world had unfolded right before my eyes.

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1. Kim Hyun-Sung's POV ☜

CHAPTER 752
TO THE END (10)

“We’ll be victorious! We’re here to win!”

“Keep pushing. Don’t let them fly! Keep casting those spells!”

“*Ahhhhhhhh!*”

“Die!”

“Help! Help!”

“Hold up your shield! Hold up your shield!”

‘It’s dangerous.’

“This is dangerous, damn it.”

The situation was bad. It was still too early to assume how the war would go, but one could somewhat deduce what was about to happen based on the ongoing situation.

‘How many bases are still standing? Are they holding up well?’

I[1] saw a demon attacking me with a spear. I ducked, dodging it and swung my axe toward the demon's shoulder. I was sure it was a really painful wound, but the demon didn’t scream in pain. It attacked me with its spear once again. If it hadn't been for my comrade next to me, the demon's spear would have pierced my neck.

I was utterly exhausted, but I had to keep swinging my axe because retreat was impossible at this point.

‘I wonder if Miss Oscar is safe.’

It seemed that she was still safe, as I could still hear her voice. However, I was feeling more relieved than hopeful. Our formation had collapsed, and we had been

completely surrounded. At this rate, I was sure the base where Miss Oscar was staying would soon be surrounded as well.

I didn't want to think negatively, but this might end up being our last final.

"Hold out until the end! Don't fall back! Never fall back!"

"We'll be victorious! We'll win!"

We had been fighting for a long time, and we were still fighting.

"Commander McCree," said someone behind me.

"Yes?" I answered.

"You have to move now," he ordered.

"Where?" I asked.

"To where Oscar—I mean, to where Miss Oscar is located," he answered.

"…"

"The front line has collapsed, so joining her is the best choice… We just need to break through their line. Lead the way," he instructed.

"…"

"I'll buy you time by staying here," he added.

"I think it's better if I…"

"No, I can't let someone young take that responsibility," he interrupted.

The man before me was once called the Sword of the Empire. He was a great commander who had overcome many life-and-death battles. He had also led many wars to victory. He was a powerful man who had been protecting the imperial family for a long time now.

I looked up slowly and saw Mr. Victor Hart with a complicated expression

“Mr. Victor Hart,” I said.

“I regret it,” he said.

“…”

“I regret what I've done. I don’t want to acknowledge it, but I must. Regardless of his intentions, he changed the empire—no, the continent. I had no idea why Goddess Benigoa had chosen him, but I finally understand it now.

"Go ahead and protect the new leader. Also…” Victor Hart trailed off.

“What? What do you…”

“Send Father Lee Ki-Young my regards,” Victor Hart continued.

“What?”

“Go, now,” Victor Hart ordered.

“Y-Yes, sir,” I said.

Victor Hart started swinging his sword, and he slowly created a space. It was tiny, but I immediately took advantage of that space

“Let’s move! We’ll join Miss Oscar!” I shouted.

“This is our last battlefield, warriors of the Democratic Country!”

Shouting and screams echoed behind me as the troops did their best to open up a path. I glanced at them and saw that their expressions were devoid of fear—they didn’t seem to be afraid of death.

They were aware that this was the end, but they remained defiant, resisting the enemies while holding up their shields.

I had never seen a sight like this despite having participated in many battles.

There was no such thing as a noble death.

Death was always scary and dreadful, but… I could empathize with them because we were moving with one cause in mind. I knew our death wouldn't be worthless.

We were fighting to protect the continent, our values, and for the light. I was sure the light was living inside these troops. They were fighting with the radiant light that Father Lee Ki-Young had bestowed upon us, and they knew their sacrifice would not be in vain.

It was the same for me.

I was fighting for the continent, just like Father Lee Ki-Young. I would fight to vanquish the darkness threatening to engulf this land. Of course, I had something I wanted to protect as well.

I saw our leader not too far away. She was the symbol of freedom, and she had led the Sacred Democratic Country's revolution. The revolutionist, who cut her hair short to show that she was going to put everything on the line, raised her sword high and protected the tiny flame of fervor inside us.

"Don't fear death, soldiers of the Democratic Country! Remember that our death will not be in vain! Father Lee Ki-Young will remember us! History will remember us! I'll remember all of you! I'll look at each and every one of you and remember your faces!" Oscar exclaimed.

'Oscar.'

"I'm proud, heroes of the Democratic Country! History and the future generations will sing about our final moments, and I feel proud at the thought of it alone! I'm proud thinking that I'll meet my end with the heroes here and that I'll be remembered with the heroes who are here! Naturally, all of you should feel proud as well!" Oscar shouted.

'Miss Oscar.'

"Don't lose the light of hope until the end! Even if we lose, the light will win! The sons and daughters of Goddess Benigoa will become victorious in the end! Resist until the very end! Our final moments will surely contribute to the light! Remember that the Holy Church of Benigoa was founded on the beliefs of freedom and resistance—remember that and transform it into your strength!

"Our roots will give you strength! Show the enemy our pride! Let's show them that we are the sons and the daughters of Goddess Benigoa!" Oscar roared.

'She used to be someone who couldn't even handle a sword properly.'

I couldn't say that it was *that* useful, but the fact that she was fighting with us gave me strength. The thought that the greatest figure of the Sacred Democratic Country was about to face death with us was comforting, but…

'I can't let her die with us.'

I couldn't let history be written that way.

Miss Oscar had to be remembered as the leader of the Democratic Country, who had reigned for a long time. She couldn't be remembered as the leader who had met her tragic end with her troops.

I was sure there were others who felt the same way as me. The numerous soldiers trying to maintain the front line with everything they had looked determined to fight for the leader who genuinely cared about them.

'We must save her.'

I needed to protect her, even if it meant sacrificing myself.

'Goddess Benigoa, you can take this worthless life of mine, so please… please let the symbol of the Democratic Country, whom you've chosen yourself, live a long life.'

"Goddess Benigoa…" I mumbled.

"Protect! Stop them at all costs!"

"The light of hope will never go out. The light will win even if we fall. We must give strength to the light and Father Lee Ki-Young!"

"Hold out! Hold out!"

"Holy knights! Stay in the battle until the very end! Goddess Benigoa will guide you to the arms of light! Father Lee Ki-Young will guide us to Goddess Benigoa's side!"

“Goddess Benigoa! Goddess Benigoa!”

“For the son of god! For the one chosen by the light!”

“Protect Miss Oscar! Protect the Democratic Country!”

However, the war was starting to become one-sided.

I would see Miss Oscar shouting with all her might every time a named hero collapsed to the ground. Hope was still shining in her eyes, but she was biting her lips. I wasn’t sure, but she seemed to have the same expression as Victor Hart earlier.

‘Regret?’

I had no idea why she looked so regretful, but she was mumbling to herself. She might be saying her last words, and it was then that Miss Oscar's expression changed drastically.

‘Uh… ’

The sparkle of hope in her eyes erupted, and she smiled. "Reinforcements!"

“*Ah…”*

“Reinforcements! They’re coming! Hold out a little longer, Heroes of the Continent!”

“*Ha… hahaha!*”

“Hold out a little longer! Just a little longer!”

“Reinforcements…!”

The atmosphere was changing in real-time.

“Prepare your spells!”

“What… the heck…”

Something was happening, but I couldn't see it.

I looked up, following everyone's gazes, and saw a black dot leaving a black streak in the air.

'What is that?'

The black dot blinked, and in the very next moment, the head of a demon in the distance flew into the sky. No, it wasn't just one singular demon. The demons that had surrounded us started falling like trees, one after another.

Even those in the sky weren't spared. They were about to flap their wings and escape, but they suddenly fell to the ground

"A miracle?" I questioned.

I couldn't see anything else other than a black streak in the air.

The black streak of light soon filled the sky.

Boom!

Rumble!

The ground suddenly split open. I couldn't understand what was happening, and it wasn't just me. Everyone else stood dumbstruck at the shocking sight, and we couldn't even cheer as the sight before us was just too ridiculous for us to comprehend.

Just then, I saw the nearby mages and priests casting their spells toward somewhere in the air. Shining beams of light took to the skies, hitting the streak of black light as it drew more lines in the air.

Dozens of demons fell to the ground in the proverbial blink of an eye. I couldn't tell what was going on because the streak of black light was moving too fast for me to track, but the streak of black light moved nonstop.

"*Ha… haha…*"

Boom!

A deafening noise echoed, and a black ball descended upon the enemy troops. The

scene looked like someone was sketching on the canvas, which was the entire battlefield. No, actually, it looked like a comet was falling upon the enemy troops.

'Am I... Am I dreaming right now?'

The black streak of light was moving throughout the entire battlefield. The demons were falling to the ground. Overall, I couldn't understand what was going on.

'What... the hell is going on?'

"It's the Sunset Swordsman."

"What?"

"The Sunset Swordsman is here!"

I heard someone shouting amongst the mages.

'That black streak of light is the Sunset Swordsman?'

"T-That?"

It didn't take long for someone to answer my question.

Eventually, the black streak of light stopped in mid-air...

"The Guild Master of... the Blue Guild," I mumbled.

I saw the hero breathing slowly, but he looked more like a demon than a hero. He had black wings, large horns, long hair, and crimson eyes. I wasn't sure whether it was because of the unrealistic sight, but the first emotion I felt was fear rather than awe.

"A demon..." I mumbled.

However, I immediately corrected myself when I saw the golden, radiant, and divine light in his left eye.

"No, that's... a god..."

1. Commander McCree’s POV ☜

CHAPTER 753
TO THE END (11)

The pigeons fell like raindrops after getting cut in half by the black streak of light. I[1] was watching from afar, so that was all I could see. I was sure other people saw Kim Hyun-Sung as nothing but a black streak of light as well.

I drew a line with my finger on the massive Goddess' Mirror in front of me, and I saw Kim Hyun-Sung following my finger. Of course, it wasn't a new feature of the Goddess' Mirror and hand mirrors.

- Affirmative.

“Okay.”

Kim Hyun-Sung knew what I wanted and where I wanted him to go. He didn’t even need to say "affirmative," as he already knew what I was thinking before I told him. I didn’t know how, but he definitely knew what I was thinking.

‘He’s not reading my thoughts as well, is he?’

No, that was impossible. The new attribute I had obtained was Regressor Instruction Manual, not Lee Ki-Young Instruction Manual, which meant that I was using him, not the other way around. I understood his feelings, I could see through his eyes, and I understood his condition as well. He was also moving in the way I wanted him to move.

‘Shit… ’

I reckoned that was the reason he felt a rush of adrenaline and felt his head spinning. It was the same ordinary people suddenly becoming superhuman. I wouldn't be able to use Kim Hyun-Sung's power, but I could feel what he was feeling while wielding that power.

Kim Hyun-Sung moved so fast that the air would let out a shrill cry whenever he streaked through the air, and his sword was capable of turning boulders into dust.

I could feel the sword technique of the swordsman who had reached his peak, his true power, as well as the heat and the hostility filling the battlefield. I could smell and feel what Kim Hyun-Sung, a superhuman, was feeling. Of course, I could also feel his excitement and everything else as well.

What Kim Hyun-Sung felt was my connection to him and my expectations. It was definitely enough to assuage the scared and self-conscious Kim Hyun-Sung. I was sure I was right, as I was the only person who understood him.

'Of course, I understand him… '

Kim Hyun-Sung had always been afraid of making choices. I wasn't sure if that was his innate personality or if that side of him had developed later, but it was probably the latter. The trial that the masked hero had given to the regressor was making him stronger, but it was making him weak at the same time.

Kim Hyun-Sung's past life was a typical story of what an ordinary person would do if they suddenly became a protagonist. Kim Hyun-Sung had ruined everything. Starting from the tutorial dungeon until the end, he had made the worst choices possible.

Whenever he made decisions, his comrades would either die or become crippled. He eventually broke down before the masked hero's trial. I was sure he was still traumatized by what he had experienced, which had to be the reason he was scared of making decisions.

He had been pretending that he did not care and that it didn't matter, but he was scared.

The trauma deep inside Kim Hyun-Sung's heart—no, soul was suppressing Kim Hyun-Sung's true power. If I were to make an analogy, Kim Hyun-Sung was like a shackled beast.

- *Ha… haha!*

Kim Hyun-Sung probably thought that I was giving him power, but the power he was showing right now was his true power. He could do so much more than what Mind's Eye was showing. Kim Hyun-Sung was…

'Fuckin' strong. Seriously.'

His power was beyond my own calculations.

Booooooooooom!!!

Craaaaaaaack!

Kabooooooooooom!!!

'Everyone, look at him sweeping through the battlefield. Isn't that scene only seen in comics?'

- Affirmative!

“Focus,” I said.

- Okay!

Kim Hyun-Sung looked happy, and every time he swung his sword, a black wave would engulf the enemies. It turned out that the regressor hadn't been exaggerating when he said that he could fight all day.

I didn't even have to deploy troops to support him. I didn’t have to support him with protection spells, and I didn't have to order the other named heroes to make space for him.

Kim Hyun-Sung was fighting by himself, but he didn’t seem like he was overdoing it.

Massive beams of light, arrows, and spears were flying toward him from all directions, but I didn’t bother asking for help. Why? Because Kim Hyun-Sung was looking at them.

Kim Hyun-Sung could see everything on this battlefield, but of course, I was the one making all the decisions rather than him. I would determine the best course of action and the best way to do that certain action. I was making decisions based on all the information pouring into my head.

‘They’re not selfish decisions, either.’

I would find the most reasonable route based on Kim Hyun-Sung’s condition, his experience, his thoughts, and my personal opinion. It didn’t take long for me to

decide. I didn't really know how this was possible because it was like asking someone, "How are you capable of thinking?"

Just like that, the command system was soon fused into Kim Hyun-Sung, and it felt like our brains had become one.

Kim Hyun-Sung nodded and blocked the oncoming spear. His arm had become slightly numb, and he broke through the beams of light while using his wings to cover his entire body. Then, he flapped his wings, disrupting the oncoming arrows. Kim Hyun-Sung then spread his wings and swung Durandal, sending dozens of pigeons flying away.

The black streak of light streaked across the sky once again.

'Shit, he's fast!'

The black streak of light left a trail of black in the air.

'You're too fast, Hyun-Sung.'

I saw Victor Hart struggling in front of me. It'd be a waste to let him die like this, so I thought it'd be best to save him. I changed the route, and I felt Kim Hyun-Sung changing directions.

The old man I saw from afar suddenly appeared close to me. A group of pigeons that were attacking the old man with their spears were blasted away by Kim Hyun-Sung.

Boom!

I heard a voice afterward.

- Y-You're…

"It's been a while, sir."

- It's been a while, sir.

"I didn't want you to copy me, Mr. Hyun-Sung," I told him.

- *Ah…* okay.

Was his golden hair and strange eye *that* cool? The old man stared at Kim Hyun-Sung in a daze.

- *Ha… haha…* It has. I see… It seems that there's another Chosen One.

-…

-…

- No, there's only one Chosen One.

- ?

- The Chosen One chose me.

'Wow, I'm so proud of you Hyun-Sung. Yeah, I chose you.'

- No… that's not true… You're…

The old man vanished, and I felt Kim Hyun-Sung swinging his sword again as he left afterimages in the air. I could feel the swordsman's feelings as he swung his sword.

'Wow, shit. Maybe I can get stronger as well.'

Kim Hyun-Sung's sword technique had already been carved in my head, so I should be able to take out a few lowly thugs.

Kim Hyun-Sug continued swinging his sword, weaving his own route through the enemies. Every single pigeon that was unfortunate enough to collide with the black streak of light fell to the ground.

'Let's gooo! Let's gooooo!'

Boooooooooooom!

Craaaaack!

Boom!

'I thought he only knew how to use swords; his movement is pretty great as well, so this

is really surprising. How come you've just revealed it, man? You've been holding it back too much. Wait, maybe you forgot it?'

Kim Hyun-Sung slammed his sword into the ground and started fighting the pigeons with his limbs.

Boooom!

A loud explosion echoed. It was so loud that it seemed unreal, and I saw the pigeons explode into bloody mists upon getting hit by Kim Hyun-Sung's fists.

'It doesn't fit your overall theme, but I think it'll be cool if you charge at them with your horns. You won't have much use for them after today, so why not use them at least once?'

When the ridiculous order popped into my head, I saw Kim Hyun-Sung charging toward a pigeon.

"*Ah…*"

It wasn't bad, but it definitely didn't fit his overall theme.

'Ah… this is too easy.'

Things were going so swimmingly that we could do silly things like this. Kim Hyun-Sung was overpowering them, and Kim Hyun-Sung was like a wolf in a flock of sheep.

And that was when sharp pain struck my shoulders…

"*AH!*"

I turned and saw a named pigeon drawing its bow.

'I take back what I just said. I shouldn't keep my guard down.'

The pigeon seemed to be a sniper, and I got too carried away to detect the invisible arrow. Kim Hyun-Sung also looked surprised, but I didn't know why because the arrow had landed on his shoulder.

'Can he not feel pain, or is it just because he has gotten used to it? Shit, that really

hurts… '

- A-Are you okay?

"*Ah…* yes, I'm fine…" I answered.

- I-I-I'm… sorry. I'm…

"It's fine," I said.

'Ah… he's getting scared again.'

"I think I can reduce the percentage of pain that we share. Please calm down. I think you're getting too worked up," I told him.

An immense amount of rage filled my head, and before I could give him an order, the face of the named pigeon who had shot the arrow at him was already covered in blood.

However, Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't done just yet. He hacked the pigeon's limbs into pieces, creating a grotesque scene that I found to be quite disgusting.

- You bastard!

'Okay, that's enough. Doom Hyun-Sung, you hot-headed bastard… '

I could probably control his emotions as well. I calmed myself down, and I saw Kim Hyun-Sung calming down, slowly collecting his breath.

'This actually works.'

The blood that had rushed into my brain gradually flowed down.

Kim Hyun-Sung nodded slowly, seemingly realizing that he indeed got a bit too mad.

- I'm sorry.

"It's fine. I think I also lost focus for a moment. Well, then…" I said.

- No… I'm really sorry.

“Please focus on the battle,” I ordered.

- Okay.

The war wasn’t over yet, and even though my shoulder was hurting a little, it wasn’t enough for me to lose sight of Kim Hyun-Sung’s movements. He moved even faster while biting his lips even harder.

The explosions and loud noises were nonstop. He was so focused that I no longer heard him say, “Affirmative.”

Kim Hyun-Sung was swinging his sword, and even though I ordered the Sunset Swordsman, I unfortunately received Doom Hyun-Sung. However, a large clump of darkness soon filled the enemy camp. Everything—everything happened in the blink of an eye.

‘Shit, he’s so cool.’

The sight of him gave me goosebumps, and I was sure others would feel the same as me at the sight. If others were to disagree, then…

‘They would be working for a demon… ’

I would have to call the Heretic Inquisitors on them, as it would be the best thing to do.

Kim Hyun-Sung was holding his head with one hand, seemingly in pain, but he was still performing so well that I couldn’t take my eyes off him.

“That was good. Let’s go straight to the next area. I think we can put an end to this war soon,” I told him.

Kim Hyun-Sung nodded and looked at his hand.

- Okay.

He nodded once again. He looked really happy, but I noticed something off. I could feel fear and determination deep inside of him, and even though it lasted only for a brief moment, I was sure I definitely felt those two emotions in him.

‘What the hell? Fear? Why are you afraid? Is it because of what happened earlier?’

'Do you really think you can trick me? I have the keys to your thoughts, so I can unlock it quite easily.'

I decided to go a bit deeper, and I finally felt his emotions.

“…”

- Where should I head next?

“…”

- I’d like to end the war quickly, Mr. Ki-Young. We shouldn’t…

“…”

- I’ll get going.

‘Ha… this guy.’

It wasn’t a big problem for me, but…

Kim Hyun-Sung… Kim Hyun-Sung had just remembered his own death, and those emotions had come from that scene. To make matters worse, the determination had come from the decision he had made to end all of this by sacrificing himself.

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1. Lee Ki-Young’s POV ☜

CHAPTER 754
TO THE END (12)

I looked at Kim Hyun-Sung again, but nothing really changed.

It was so absurd that I was at a loss for words.

'Kim Hyun-Sung hasn't matured mentally.'

"…"

'At this point, isn't it safe to say that he's mentally ill or something?'

"…"

'I'm the idiot. I was the idiot.'

I was so shocked, and I felt like an idiot for complimenting him for regaining consciousness when he had gone completely crazy. I was an idiot for thinking that he had matured internally after waking up.

'I really thought you matured, but that was all a bunch of bullshit. Actually, you did *mature, but you took the wrong path.'*

That wasn't supposed to happen…

If it hadn't been for the Regressor Instruction Manual, he would have been in big trouble. The situation would have taken a turn for the worse.

Something was definitely off because Kim Hyun-Sung would never ask for my help, and it was kind of strange that he'd ask me for help in the first place. It didn't make sense that he suddenly asked me to work with him when he had been blocking my calls and was stubborn out of worry that he would end up exhausting me.

He had always felt guilty for giving me all of his burden instead of sharing it with me, and he felt even guiltier when he saw that I was as unstable as a sick bird. In other

words, the fact that I was so weak that I could die at any moment had definitely made him feel incredibly guilty. In addition, the amnesia stunt was still ongoing.

Kim Hyun-Sung seemed like he was on some kind of drug because he suddenly asked me for help. I was sure he asked me for help because he really needed my help, but I thought it was because he considered this battle as his final battle.

He had concluded that it would be the best-case scenario for us to end this war as soon as possible. He probably wanted us to spend time together one last time before everything was over, and he probably thought of that as his way of compensating me for everything so far.

This could be a part of his bucket list as well, as fighting by himself was pretty lonely.

'Did you wake up to film this sacrifice arc? I have no idea why you've decided to film such a thing when you've been running away so far.'

"…"

'I really want to know what he's thinking.'

I was inside of his "head," but I had no idea how to figure out his deep inner thoughts.

However, I didn't have to figure it out to understand. His thoughts and feelings were obvious. I couldn't really pinpoint it and say with certainty, but considering the environment he had been living in during his first life and the emotions he had felt at the time…

'It's pretty obvious.'

If I were in Kim Hyun-Sung's shoes, I would be thinking along the lines of—*'All I've been doing is running. Despite knowing my role, I've been ignoring it. I've finally realized why I became a regressor, and I'm not going to run away anymore.'*

It was true that Kim Hyun-Sung had been running away, but was there anything wrong with running away? Had someone threatened him to stop running away? It was only natural for people to run and ignore things when necessary. Why was that a problem?

Kim Hyun-Sung had probably recalled the moment when he received Seraphim's judgment.

'I've committed many sins and have been ignoring them. I've been thinking about what I should do to atone for my sins—blah, blah, blah. To atone for my sins, blah, blah. I'll finally pay for my sins, blah, blah, blah. I'll carry everything blah, blah, blah.'

Kim Hyun-Sung was building up to his final moment while mumbling such lines. I wasn't saying this because I was a scum, but he really looked like he had gone crazy.

'Does anyone really care about the sins you've committed during your past life? Damn it, it's not like you can do anything about that now. You're already in the middle of your second life, so… can't you consider this a new start? Why are you living such a difficult life? I understand that this is the reason you were chosen by a god, loved, and named as a hero. You even became the protagonist, but… this is just too much. Really.'

I knew that Kim Hyun-Sung hadn't told me everything that happened in his past life, and it was pretty obvious that he had left out some parts for fear of disappointing me—the saint of light. He told me that there was a war, but he didn't tell me what he was doing during that war, how many people he killed, and how cruel he was based on his standards.

There were questionable parts, too, and it made me wonder: had Kim Hyun-Sung had a hand in Park Deok-Gu's death, which led to the innocent and ordinary Lee Ki-Young becoming a masked hero? If so, just how deep was his involvement?

'I mean, was he even involved at all?'

I had no idea what happened at the time, but Park Deok-Gu died under a massive spell that covered a big chunk of a city. It was a spell that couldn't be cast without confirmation from the higher-ups.

The empress at the time definitely had the final say, but I couldn't say with certainty that Kim Hyun-Sung hadn't expressed his opinion on the matter. Of course, whether or not he was involved didn't really matter anymore.

I knew that everyone had a reason for their actions, and in the end, I wasn't the masked hero[1]. I had received his dying wish, but just because he was mad didn't necessarily mean that I had to be mad as well.

- Mr. Ki-Young?

"…"

- Mr. Ki-Young?

"Yes?" I answered.

- Is something wrong?

"No, it's nothing. I thought I've been sending you the path you should take. Is something wrong?" I asked.

- No… it's nothing like that…

"You're doing fine. You're doing well," I told him.

-…

"Your influence on the battlefield is *veeery* significant. I think you can end this all by yourself," I said.

- I-I'm sorry.

"*Huh?* I don't know what you're apologizing about. What are you sorry about? I want to hear what you're sorry about," I asked.

- I'm sorry. I…

"You have to tell me what you're apologizing about for me to accept your apology. You're basically just saying it because you want to avoid this situation. Stop saying empty words and just focus on what's in front of you," I told him.

- I'm really sorry. I, so, just now, I ignored your order and acted on my own… I got angry, too… I'm sorry.

"I'm not mad about that," I said.

- Did you get hurt because of my carelessness…

“No, you’re the one who got hurt, not me. I can't feel your pain anymore, so fight to your heart’s content. No one will stop you,” I informed him.

- I-I’m really sorry.

“What are you sorry about?” I asked.

-…

It was like Kim Hyun-Sung’s emotions had instantly fallen into a ditch. He was losing focus and was out of it.

‘Man… ’

I was annoyed, so I was being unreasonable, but… it seemed to be working.

‘Was I too harsh?’

He seemed to be thinking that this was his final moment.

He obviously wanted to spend his final moment together with me, who was like a brother to him, on the battlefield and talk about things we had never really talked about.

Then, we would build an even closer connection to each other, say some cool lines, and then say goodbye in tears.

However, my reaction definitely made him feel sad. Of course, it wasn’t the end yet, but it was enough to make Kim Hyun-Sung sad.

In addition to the fact that he couldn't do a proper farewell, he even ruined everything, including my mood.

He had no idea what he did to ruin my mood, so I was sure he was frustrated. As expected, I felt him digging deeper into himself. He started from questioning what he did wrong to feeling a deep sense of shame.

He was swinging his sword and fighting hard on the battlefield, but his trembling eyes and tense body told me how he was feeling.

"…"

- So…

"…"

'Alright, let's just stop. I just wanted to give it a try. Thinking about it now, there's no reason for me to be so worked up like this.'

There was no way Kim Hyun-Sung could make his plan a successful one. I had to get stabbed at the end, not Kim Hyun-Sung sacrificing himself. In his eyes, I was sure that ending was worse than his self-sacrifice ending, but it was definitely the better ending out of all endings.

After all, he would live, and he wouldn't get to sacrifice himself.

His comrade would make the sacrifice for him.

'I'll sacrifice myself in your place.'

The thought broke my heart a bit.

'It's pretty cool.'

It sounded pretty cool to the point that I felt like I had fallen for myself.

'Ah, shit. I really wish I had that anesthesia potion.'

- So… I'm… sorry…

"Well, since you've said it like that… I accept your apology," I said.

- Really?

"Yes. I understand why you were so worked up. However, all this would be meaningless if you were to act arbitrarily, so please don't ignore my orders. It wasn't as painful as you think," I told him.

- Okay, I'll do that. I won't ignore your orders anymore.

‘That was easy.’

He was very honest in expressing his emotions to the point that I could see them impacting the battlefield before I could even feel them. The black streak of light that killed the enemies instantly was so amazing that I didn't feel like talking about the mistake just now again.

It felt like the war was already over as a god-like being had descended upon the battlefield. We seemed outnumbered, but Kim Hyun-Sung would turn the tides of every single fight in our favor before moving on to another region.

Then, he would do the same thing again and again; the regressor was making an impact on the entire northern region, and it seemed like he was devouring the enemy's flame.

‘I wonder how many regions are left.’

The war was changing in our favor. Every single battle that had received Kim Hyun-Sung's intervention quickly became favorable to us.

‘Fortunately, the continent isn’t that incompetent.’

The continent wasn’t so incompetent that they couldn't finish things off when everything had been set up for them. Park Yeon-Joo, Oscar, Old Man Victor Hart, Cheon Kwan-Wi Yu Ran, and the heroes that represented each base had definitely noticed that we were winning because they were driving out the enemy.

Soon, I was struck by deja vu—it felt like I had seen this scene before.

I had no idea when Cha Hee-Ra arrived, but I saw her running around the battlefield.

I saw spears sticking out of her, but she seemed like she didn’t care about the spears, which meant that the spears were too weak to cause significant damage to her.

Once again, I was struck by deja vu. I had seen this scene before—yes, I saw it through Kasugano Yuno.

‘I think it’s really time.’

- Mr. Ki-Young.

“Yes?” I answered.

- So…

“Yes?”

- Do you have some time right now?

“I do,” I replied.

- Do you remember… the first time we met?

‘Ah, looks like we’re going down memory lane.’

“Of course I do. We talked about it pretty often before,” I answered.

‘We talked about this a lot.’

- I remember how you told me that you thought of me as a cold-hearted person. I actually was, but… thinking about it now, I think I was just trying not to get close to anyone.

‘You’re not planning on going all the way back to when we first met, are you? We really don't have time for that if you are… ’

- When we first joined the Blue Guild…

Kim Hyun-Sung hadn't realized that he had done something cruel with his own hands as he continued walking down memory lane.

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1. written like this, really ☜

CHAPTER 755
TO THE END (13)

- So…

The conversation wasn’t going to end anytime soon, and I saw Kim Hyun-Sung trying to be emotional…

‘I knew this would happen.’

Kim Hyun-Sung was usually quiet, but he was the type that would never stop talking once he was allowed to talk. He wasn't exactly fun to chat with, and I would often have issues talking to him.

I would end the conversation if it were possible, but I would look like a psychopath if I were to do something like that, so I decided to stay quiet. This was his final trip down memory lane, and I was sure there were many things he wanted to say before he sacrificed himself.

Anyway, he started talking as if he had been looking forward to this moment.

- I felt really bad for not taking better care of you when we first entered the Blue Guild.

“I see…”

Yeah, that was pretty bad. I could still remember how he gave me every single possible guild task. Now that I thought about it, I was sure he wouldn't say anything, even if I threw a hundred rocks at him as revenge.

- All I thought about was growing the guild as fast as possible, so I unknowingly put a ton of burden on your shoulders.

“…”

‘This guy is lying. You gave me all those tasks on purpose.’

- At the time, I made that decision because I trusted your abilities, but thinking about it now, I think that was pretty immature of me. I did bring in Miss Hye-Jin to lessen the burden, but even that was…

'At least he knows what he did wrong. It's fine now since I'm getting along with Hye-Jin, but I wanted to kill her back then. It was really annoying. Fortunately, he got me a few presents.'

I decided to keep my thoughts to myself to maintain this heartwarming mood.

"It's all in the past. If you were to ask me if I resented you, I would say I did, but…" I trailed off.

- I'm sorry.

"You don't have to apologize. I just laugh whenever I recall those times," I told him.

- *Ha… haha.* I'm glad you think that way.

"It was the same for the dungeon raid. At the time, I was exhausted, and I was suffering from the thought of following everyone, but… I think it was all a fun experience. It was the same when we first went to the Garden of Horror. Was it Miss Jung Yoo-Ra? I was really satisfied with everything.

"I knew there was a special side to you, but… I was able to confirm that at the garden. If it hadn't been for you, I wouldn't have been able to experience an expedition like that," I said.

- The Cursed Shrine as well…

'Ah, that's right.'

- It was kind of dangerous, but I never imagined that you'd contribute to clearing the dungeon by creating potions. That's not how you were supposed to clear the shrine, but… I still remember how you imitated Gedric. *Ha… haha…* In the end, you took Juliena, but…

'You still have a grudge about that?'

- It wasn't mine to begin with. Also, Juliena's wielder back then was Jung Jin-Ho, the

magic swordsman.

That was what I had assumed, and he had just confirmed that I was right.

- It's a good item for many reasons, so I was thinking about using it from the beginning of this life…

'He's pretty narrow-minded.'

- Back then, the sword didn't move on its own, but… thinking about it now, I think you were lucky to get that sword. Do you remember practicing swordsmanship at the time?

"Yes, it was really difficult… I had to stop because the guild started getting busy, but honestly…"I trailed off.

'You were mad at me back then, right? You were upset that I took Juliena from you, right?'

- I'm telling you this because I don't want any misunderstandings, but it wasn't my intention to make you suffer. Since you obtained a great sword… I thought it would be great if you at least knew the basics…

'Stop lying. You knew I had no talent in using a sword.'

- In the end, I obtained a better sword during the next expedition…

"Yes, at the museum…" I said.

- I never imagined I'd obtain a sword that I'd be using to this day. I didn't know our party would end up in such a dangerous situation. The Fragment of the Ancient God and the downfall of the continent. I remember being really shocked.

"What about now? If you were to return to the museum now…" I asked.

- I can't say it with certainty, but in my current condition, it's highly likely that I can face it.

"I think I finally understand how much you've grown, *haha*," I laughed.

- I wasn't the only one who had contributed.

Kim Hyun-Sung was smiling bitterly.

- I think we experienced many incidents as well. We even changed the empire to the Sacred Democratic Country.

“I couldn’t let Charlia become the empress. I didn’t think it would end this well, so in some ways, it’s all thanks to you, Mr. Hyun-Sung. I have something to ask. Back then…” I trailed off.

‘Where the hell were you?’

- I was looking for a group of black mages. Many things have changed compared to my past life, so I had to do something at the time. Now that I think about it, whenever something important came up, we were always apart.

“Are you referring to the time Belial was summoned at Laios?” I asked.

- Yes. I remember being really worried. I came later, but… I couldn’t protect you. That man, Jin Cheong, was clever and was like a demon, but it’s an undeniable fact that my incompetence was the root cause of all of it.

“You don’t need to blame yourself for everything. The situation did kind of turn out bad, but you had your own thing to take care of,” I said.

- But…

“The injuries I received at the time are gone now. I’m actually proud of those wounds. I still can’t forget the moment when the denizens of Laios started praying for me. I’m thankful for Ha-Yan, Miss Sora, and Deok-Gu. They fought with me, after all. *Ah*, of course, I’m thankful for you as well, Mr. Hyun-Sung,” I continued.

- I-If you hadn't been here, I wouldn’t have made it this far. If Jin Cheong were still alive, this war would…

Kim Hyun-Sung was having negative thoughts, and I could see it on his grim face.

‘I think that was me, Hyun-Sung.’

“I was really surprised when you told me about your past life because I didn’t know Jin Cheong was *that* evil,” I said.

- I could probably stay up all night just talking about him. He was *that* evil.

‘I’m kind of hurt. It was all for you.’

“I can still remember how you were suspicious of me as well,” I said.

- I’m… sorry about that.’

‘You don’t have to apologize because you’ll question me again soon. I’m sure of it.’

- Of course, I knew it couldn’t be you, but after thinking about it again and again, something must’ve bothered me. If I were to give an excuse, I would say it’s because I wasn’t prepared to trust everyone yet.’

“What made you change your mind?” I asked.

- I remember meeting a woman. That’s obviously not enough, but…

‘Ah, I think that was me as well, but let’s not talk about it. There’s no reason to talk about it.’

- That woman told me she lost someone important as well, and it was because she couldn’t trust him. It was kind of different from what I was experiencing, but I think her advice helped me a lot. However, I did end up hurting her pretty badly… I'm going to apologize to her if we ever meet again.

“I’m sure she understands that you didn’t mean her any harm,” I commented.

- I hope that’s the case… *Haha*. If she really thinks that way, then I’m glad, but she probably despises me.

Kim Hyun-Sung smiled bitterly and raised his sword. I was kind of surprised that he could even think while fighting the pigeons, but he seemed to be focused more on the conversation than the battle.

‘There isn’t really a problem with carrying out his tasks.’

And I didn’t really want to criticize him either…

My mood improved due to our conversation, but unlike him, I couldn't get fully immersed in the conversation. Still…

‘It’s been a while.’

It had been a while since we had a deep conversation.

- The trip to the lake was fun as well…

“I really didn't expect that Deok-Gu would end up building a ship that big, and I’m sure he never expected us to use it for war,” I said.

It would be nice if we were talking over drinks. Sadly, we were talking like this in the middle of a war.

“The Mirror Salmon was really good. Honestly…”

It would be a perfect dish to accompany a wine.

- You've always been a picky eater, so I never imagined you’d eat so much of it. *Ah*, have I told you this before? The Mirror Salmon farm was a success…

“What?”

- I did have to spend some money researching it, but…

‘Wait, how much did that farm cost you? That fish swims around the dimension, so how did you… ’

“That’s good news, but still…” I trailed off.

‘Shit. You know you shouldn’t use the guild funds like that, right?’

- It would… It would be nice if we could go again.

‘No, I didn't say that. God damn it, his own line just made him feel sad.'

“We can go together next time; We also have many things to do in the future. Yes, we

can do all of those once this is over," I suggested.

'We promised to see the sunset together. Ah, maybe I shouldn't have said anything.'

It seemed like Kim Hyun-Sung was holding back his tears.

- That's true. Once all of this is over…

He seemed to be having a hard time accepting his fate, which was sacrificing himself in the end.

'You don't need to sacrifice yourself. Stop being so emotional.'

- *Um…* Mr. Ki-Young.

"Yes?"

His tone of voice kind of changed. I thought perhaps it was time to sacrifice myself, but it turned out to be the time for him to make a confession.

However, he was having a hard time bringing it up.

- I-I… was a human that was beyond redemption.

'I was wondering why he wasn't bringing this up, but Hyun-Sung. It's not that bad. Don't blame yourself too much.'

- I couldn't trust anyone… I had a hard time building relationships with others, and I was always failing. I'm not talking about my past life. Looking back, I think I've always lived that kind of life. I get very scared, so I avoid things, and I've always been running away. I was always determined to change, but it never happened. I only managed to change because of you, Mr. Ki-Young.

"I don't know about that…" I said.

- You trusted me, which was why I could trust you. Trusting someone completely is incredibly difficult, and I know that better than anyone. You helped me realize what it meant to trust someone.

'I'm thankful, but… you're making me feel worried. The more you trust someone, the

more betrayed you feel when they betray you… What if he stabs me somewhere else instead of my stomach?'

What if he ended up getting so angry that he ended up chopping my head off after his anger erupted like a volcano? I was worried that he'd stab me several times when he only needed to stab me once.

Kim Hyun-Sung was feeling a mixture of infinite trust and belief; his words and actions proved that to me.

'He'll probably adjust on his own, right?'

"I'm grateful that you said that, but I'm not that amazing," I said.

- They're not empty words.

"*Ha… haha…*"

- You have the power to change people, Mr. Ki-Young. I can tell by looking at the people around you. It's the same for Miss Ha-Yan and Cha Hee-Ra. I think you were born with positive energy and have the power to light up the people around you to the point that you inadvertently make everyone have positive thoughts.

'Thanks, but… '

- I also never imagined I'd change this much… I smiled just like the people living ordinary lives, talked, made friends, and enjoyed the trivial things…

'Yeah, I agree that you changed a lot. I still remember the look on your face when you successfully fished an item at Mirror Lake… '

"*Huh?*"

- I'd like to repay you right now.

"…"

The fun was finally over, and I saw Kim Hyun-Sung looking up quietly.

- I'll put an end to this.

Kim Hyun-Sung was looking up at Seraphim, who was looking down at him with a frown.

CHAPTER 756
TO THE END (14)

'What's wrong with one of his eyes? Did someone beat him up? Was it Cherubim?'

Seraphim's condition was abnormal.

'What's wrong?'

One of his eyes was bleeding, and I would have thought that he had lost that eye to Cherubim, but Cherubim loved his brothers a lot. In other words, it was impossible for Cherubim to dig Seraphim's eye out.

It was surprising, but it didn't take me that long to find the answer.

I saw him holding a crumpled dummy world in one hand.

'What the heck?'

"…"

Seraphim was filled with rage.

'Are you serious?'

I noticed him channeling power into the hand holding the dummy world.

'Did Dummy Ki-Young really do that?'

I could still remember Dummy Lee Ki-Young trying to find a way to influence the outside world. Ji-Hye noona scoffed and pressed the button to start the next life, and the Dummy Lee Ki-Young seemed to have found a way to kick the ass of the demon that had been tormenting him.

'Wow, shit. That's pretty scary. I knew that bastard was going to cause trouble someday… How did someone so small dig out Seraphim's eye? Did he somehow

remember his previous life? Did it stay in his subconscious? How did it get triggered?'

It was unacceptable, but it was possible. Kim Hyun-Sung was a great example of it. Who would have thought that Kim Hyun-Sung would one day become a god-like being?

It was a once-in-a-lifetime rebellion of the dummy world. The dummies had lived thousands—no, tens of thousands of lives until they could no longer take it. Fortunately, they didn't lose hope and managed to injure the transcendent demon that had been controlling their lives behind the scenes.

They rose up because they felt wronged by the fact that they were being treated as lab rats fated to relive the same life. In the end, they proved their worth by rebelling. They injured Seraphim and told the transcendent beings that they could resist fate.

However…

'You demon.'

Their creator decided to destroy the tiny world. The dummy world had been crushed into pieces, and it was a more horrible sight than I thought. If there were survivors in the dummy world, they would call Seraphim the demon that ended the world.

'The little guys didn't do anything wrong.'

I thought they were nothing more than pieces of data, but as someone who genuinely cared for them, I clenched my fist tightly.

'I knew it. He does *look pretty angry. I think he already knows what's going on.'*

He'd know unless he was stupid.

'It wouldn't have been so bad if he had trusted me a bit more, but this situation isn't that bad either.'

The coin that I had believed in so much was shattered into pieces, and I was sure Seraphim didn't think that the new human race plan was ineffective. He had probably just realized that he had been tricked.

He was also probably thinking that there was some kind of error, but I was sure he

changed his mind after losing an eye. I could guess why his eyes were injured out of all his body parts. He probably placed his eye closer to the dummy world to see if there were any issues.

'And he was attacked. That's pretty surprising.'

The pain he felt had to have made him realize that everything had all been a bluff and a lie. I couldn't describe his fury, and I was surprised he could even make that kind of expression when he had never been the type to show his emotions.

'I'm sure he feels wronged. He had invested his life savings into a stock that suddenly got delisted. He even mortally wounded Cherubim. He's ready to fight. You can defeat him, right, Hyun-Sung?'

- I'll kill you no matter what, you dirty scum. You disgusting bastard.

'He's saying that to me, right?'

-…

'I think he is. You heard what he said, right? That bastard is trying to kill me.'

- I will never let you live an ordinary life, you scummy bastard. I'll make sure that you'll be in pain for the rest of your life. You'll die in pain as well, and it's not going to be an ordinary pain. The pain will be engraved into your body and soul in the most horrific way possible. The pain you'll feel… will be beyond what you can imagine.

'You heard that, right? Shit, Hyun-Sung. That bastard said he's going to harm me.'

- I'll make sure you're in pain. No matter what! I will never forgive you! I will never!

'He's worked up, and he's scary. I think he's crazy.'

- Answer me if you're listening! You bastard! You nauseating scummy bastard! Lee Ki-Young! Lee Ki-Young!

'I should say something.'

"M-Mr. Hyun-Sung."

- You don’t need to be scared, Mr. Ki-Young.

‘I expect nothing less from you.’

- Your existence itself is evil! You’re an evil and harmful being! The fact that a scum like you is alive in this world is bad luck for the continent! You're a mistake of the dimensions!

‘Can’t you be more creative with your insults?’

- I finally understand why the dimension where you once lived had decided to throw you away! I know now! You dirty, tainted bastard! The humans that had been thrown onto this continent alongside you were just collateral damage! They got thrown out by mistake when they threw you out, you disgusting human! No god will ever choose you; you have to be and will be abandoned by everyone!

‘That is kind of creative.’

- No! You’re not even worthy of being called a human. You’re worse than a demon and a maggot that’s more harmful than a parasite! I will never let you live a comfortable life. Never! Never!

‘He really lost it.’

'You’re overreacting a bit. Please remain calm. You’re an angel among angels. You shouldn’t be talking in that manner.'

- Did you… Did you really think I’d fall for your trick?

‘I think you already did.’

- You rat! You dirty parasite!

‘Stop it already. What’s wrong? You’re being pathetic. Look at his eye roll, Hyun-Sung. You’re not going to let him stay that way, are you? Ugh… I’m getting goosebumps… ’

“Ugh…”

- Don’t worry. I can take care of this.

'I trust you, Hyun-Sung.'

The pigeon looked funny as he tried to catch his breath while looking like a trembling kettle. It was a satisfying situation for me, who still had a debt to repay. If he could hear my voice, I would jeer at him to my heart's content. *Oh*, wait, I *could* jeer at him.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Idiot! Idiooooooot! (0/1)]

[An Average-rank quest has been delivered to Seraphim. No quest rewards were declared, so Seraphim will not receive a reward.]

- You bastard! You scummy bastard!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[*Hahahahahahaha!* (0/1)]

- I'll kill you no matter what! I'll make sure you're forever in pain…

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Hey, idiot! Where's your eye? (0/1)]

- You're a scum that's worse than maggots!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Idiooooot! I asked where your eye was. Dang, that looks painful. (0/1)]

- I'm going to skin you alive. After cutting off your tongue, I'll—

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[New human race plan! Adios! New human race! Hey, have you heard? Cherubim went flying away with the new human race plan. (0/1)]

- You bastaaaaaaaaard!!!

Seraphim couldn’t contain his anger and raised his hand to the sky.

‘You’re ready to fight, right, Hyun-Sung?’

Mentally, Kim Hyun-Sung didn’t seem nervous, but he was trembling. It was the same for me. I figured it was because I recalled how Kim Hyu-Sung looked like a porcupine after getting pierced by so many swords.

However, I quickly suppressed my worries.

He won’t lose.'

Seraphim wasn’t strong. Kim Hyun-Sung and I just had to work together, and we wouldn't lose.

- Judgment!

‘You don’t have any sins.’

I wanted to tell him that, but I knew it would be pointless. Even if I were to help him, Kim Hyun-Sung wouldn't be able to ignore his sins. In the blink of an eye, the sky was filled with swords. There were so many of them that I bit my lips at the sight.

‘I can help so you won't get hit at all. You trust me, right?’

- I trust you.

‘We’re on the same page.’

Platinum-colored swords filled the sky, but it wasn’t like the sky had been blotted out completely. Kim Hyun-Sung probably felt like he was about to embark on an impossible mission like avoiding the rain, but Kim Hyun-Sung could actually make the impossible *possible*. If he somehow got hit by at least one of those swords, then…

‘I’d be the scum, damn it.’

- Divine punishment!!!

The swords started falling, and I looked at as many swords as possible—No, I looked at every single sword. I was focusing so hard that my head started spinning. A

negative thought briefly popped into my head, but I was so focused that the thought disappeared in the blink of an eye.

It felt like time had slowed down. No, it was more like time had come to a screeching halt. I believed time didn't actually stop, but I felt like it stopped.

'I can dodge the swords falling toward my shoulder by moving slightly to the side.''

It was the same for the ones aimed at his head.

'I see swords falling toward your back. You can dodge that, right? You see the space I pinged for you, right? Just move a bit and block that one. Ah, just block the one you're looking at right now, and it'll block the ones falling above it.'

Kim Hyun-Sung swung his sword while moving. However, Kim Hyun-Sung didn't take off and transform into a black streak of light. He was staring at the sky while staying on the ground.

'You can block all of them. You're faster.'

I saw Kim Hyun-Sung swinging his sword while maintaining his stance. Although time seemed to have stopped in this space, I couldn't really see his sword. To others, I was sure it looked like a hazy veil was blocking their eyes.

- Judgment!! Divine punishment!!!

'You can do it. You can see it all. You know which one you need to block first.'

Kim Hyun-Sung didn't stop moving.

- Divine punishment!!! Divine punishment!!! Divine punishment!!!

I couldn't help but smile because it was like he was getting rid of the sins he committed. It didn't really mean anything, but it felt symbolic.

Booooooooooom!

Craaaaaack!

Kabooooooooom!

The swords around him made loud noises, but none of the swords managed to touch Kim Hyun-Sung.

'I think we've gotten fuckin' strong, Hyun-Sung. You're basically invincible.'

Kim Hyun-Sung was trembling at the scenery he had created, and I was sure it was because he was happy. Even I got goosebumps just looking at it. He was standing in the middle of the swords that had piled up like a mountain range around him.

Of course, I was happy to see him unscathed in the middle of the swords.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Idiooooooooot. Is that all you got? Is it over already? (0/1)]

[An Average-rank quest has been delivered to Seraphim. No quest rewards were declared, so Seraphim will not receive a reward.]

CHAPTER 757
TO THE END (15)

'It's fun when it gets to this point.'

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Come on! Come on, you bastard! (0/1)]

'Ah, shit. I'm happy.'

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You act tough, but you're nothing but a weakling. (0/1)]

'I'm so happy.'

In a fight like this, losing control first meant losing. This was a fight between Seraphim and me rather than a fight between Seraphim and Kim Hyun-Sung. I was so happy with the situation that I couldn't hide my grin. Provoking the worked-up Seraphim helped clear my headache induced by stress.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[Judgment, my ass! You really thought you were some almighty being? That's not the case. Look at the sight before you, you idiot. Humans are in awe of things like that. You're nothing but an insect with wings. Stop acting like some second-rate god and just bow. (0/1)]

- Y-You parasitic bastard!

'What are you going to do about it? What can you do? Do you really think that you can beat our Hyun-Sung? Do you really think that you have a chance against him?!'

'Look at our Hyun-Sung. There's a saying that barking dogs never bite, which means chatterboxes usually lose fights. He's in control right now, and he's extremely strong.

He's on a different level from you. Do you really think you're special or something?'

Seraphim raised his hand in fury, but there was no way an attack that Kim Hyun-Sung could block would be effective against the latter. However, Kim Hyun-Sung dodged the swords more often than he blocked them, as he was just a superior being compared to Seraphim rather than knowing Seraphim's attack pattern.

It would be a different story if Seraphim had something else up his sleeve, but it seemed like his way of executing people for their sins was just raining down swords on them.

The only thing his attack did was summon countless numbers of swords to descend on one target.

Unfortunately for him, Kim Hyun-Sung could see the trajectory of those swords and dodge them. Kim Hyun-Sung was so good at it that I felt dumb for even worrying about him.

'Danger comes when you least expect it.'

Unless Seraphim was stupid, I was sure he'd mix it up. He'd soon go into phase two. As expected, Seraphim raised a platinum-colored sword. I thought he was weak in close-range combat, but it seemed that my assumption was wrong.

'Distance doesn't really matter.'

He'd get help from the swords that fall from the sky anyway. Those swords wouldn't target Seraphim. He was basically going to play the role of the bridgehead who would judge and execute Kim Hyun-Sung.

It seemed like things were going to get more difficult than before, but I wasn't nervous. I knew what Kim Hyun-Sung was capable of doing, and I also knew that he wasn't going to lose here.

'It's going to get kind of difficult, but you only need to worry about one thing. The moment the execution skill is activated, close in on him to buy some time. You understand what I'm saying, right?'

Seraphim would definitely get caught in the wave of swords.

‘Use him as a shield.’

It didn't matter whether Seraphim had decided to mix it up or not; all we needed to do was find a new way to counter it. Of course, I wasn’t sure if this was the right way to counter it.

‘It doesn't matter. Our lovely Kim Hyun-Sung can pull it off somehow.’

- *Eeek!*

Seraphim swung his sword angrily, and Kim Hyun-Sung was extremely focused as he clashed swords with Seraphim. He didn’t seem pressured by Seraphim’s physical prowess, but the falling wave of swords was a different story. It seemed like Seraphim's goal was to do whatever he could to approach Kim Hyun-Sung close enough to cast his execution skill rather than harming him.

‘It’s not easy.’

A single mistake could snowball into a catastrophe, so Seraphim would definitely make sure not to make any mistakes to stabilize his chance of success.

“Don’t make any mistakes,” I said, deciding to tell Kim Hyun-Sung just in case.

- I know, Mr. Ki-Young.

Kim Hyun-Sung remained calm. Seraphim's sword drew a beautiful circle in the air as he swung his sword toward Kim Hyun-Sung in a downward slash, but Kim Hyun-Sung easily blocked the attack.

Then, Kim Hyun-Sung turned slightly to block the oncoming sword from above. Of course, Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't done just yet. He didn't stop making space while moving around.

Seraphim spread his wings and disengaged.

‘What are you doing? Don't let him get away. The swords are still falling.’

Kim Hyun-Sung spread his wings and got close to Seraphim. The judgment swords that were targeting our regressor froze mid-air, so Seraphim bit his lips and pushed Kim Hyun-Sung away, but…

'That should buy him some time… '

Kim Hyun-Sung drew a circle with his sword and blocked all the oncoming attacks.

'You can even shoot arrows. This is your hidden pattern, right?'

The arrow that Seraphim had shot was pulled into the circle that Kim Hyun-Sung had created, but…

'See that?'

Kim Hyun-Sung moved his head to the side and dodged the arrow that was aimed at his head.

'Ah, shit. That's going to leave a scar.'

There was blood on one side of his cheek, but that wasn't a big problem.

- Are you okay?

"I'm fine since I blocked the sense of pain. You should just focus. You look like you're losing focus," I told him.

- I'm sorry.

'You don't need to apologize since you're the one who got hurt, not me. Anyway, don't put your guard down.'

Boom!

Craaaack!!

- Execute!

Booooooooooom!!!

- I'll start moving.

Kabooooooooooom!

- Execute!!!

Booooooooooooooom!!!

The earth and the sky were their stage. The two turned into blurry lines as they fought in the air, and even though a wave of swords was chasing after Kim Hyun-Sung, not a single one of them had been able to touch him so far.

'Focus.'

'Hang in there, Hyun-Sung. You're not the only one fighting this guy. I'm fighting him as well.'

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You're incompetent anyway. Aren't you just a fool who could only follow my shadows? (0/1)]

- Shut up! Shut up!!!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You tried to hide it, but I can see it. I know what your ugly desire is, Seraphim. I know who you wanted to be like and who you were actually imitating. *Hahaha!* How was it? Did you have fun? How did it feel to briefly become your idol? (0/1)]

- Shut up! Lee Ki-Young! Quiet!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You dumbaaas! There's no way you can become the masked hero even in your next life. No matter how hard you try, you'll be nothing more than a copycat. There's that saying that the essence of humans doesn't change. You're not human, but in my eyes, you guys are the same. Your essence never changes. You'll always be the same Seraphim from the first life. You're a pathetic, jealous, and a disgusting pigeon. (0/1)]

- Shut up! Shut uuuuuup!!!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You seem really worked up. Are you crying? *Hahahaha!* Are you seriously crying? (0/1)]

- Shut up!!!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[The masked hero never rages like you, pigeon. He's your idol, right? You should have taken some time learning from him. (0/1)]

- You dirty traitor! You disgusting parasite! You're nothing but a piece of trash the dimension had spat out! W-Who said I… was imitating you?!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[What do you mean who? It was you, Seraphim. Also, I don't understand why you're calling me a traitor, but the masked hero has never been a traitor. He was a hero among heroes who fought for mankind from the very beginning. Shit. How dare you call me a traitor. The real traitor is you because you abandoned your brothers. (0/1)]

- I'll cut out that tongue of yours. I'll make sure of it…

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[Did you really not like how you looked? Were you so dissatisfied with yourself that you wanted to imitate me? Our poor Seraphim—our poor pigeon with low self-esteem. I don't need to see the first life to see what kind of pigeon you were. You were probably different from how you are right now, am I right? (0/1)]

- Lee Ki-Young… Lee Ki-Young… Lee Ki-Young!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[No need to feel embarrassed or worked up, Seraphim. That's what you truly are. Am I wrong? You had been imitating me and had created this strange side of yourself, but your original self wasn't strange at all. (0/1)]

- Lee Ki-Young!

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You guys are all creations, anyway. (0/1)]

Seraphim abruptly stopped moving.

'Did I get too blunt?'

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[Unlike humans, you guys were created artificially, which is why you guys are jealous and envious of humans. What you've been saying about managing humans is just your self-defense mechanism acting up. Thinking that you guys are better than humans is a self-defense mechanism that you guys created for yourselves. You guys probably thought that all of you would get recycled once you guys no longer have any purpose. You guys are just envious of humans living life with purpose. You guys have been thinking too highly of yourselves. (0/1)]

Seraphim bit his lips.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[Don't be embarrassed, Seraphim. You were created like that, so you'd always be like that. *Haha!* You'll be created in the same way again and again! *Hahahaha!* You're a pitiful pigeon fated to be recycled and created in the same way. *Hahahaha! Hahahahaha!* (0/1)]

Seraphim looked as if he had gotten cornered. He looked like he was going to cry at any moment now.

'Did you see that, Hyun-Sung? I'm fighting hard, too.'

- S-S-Shut up… Shut up…

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[You called me a piece of trash that the dimension spat out, but you guys are the real waste that didn't get selected by any dimensions, you dumbasses! You won't find any beings who will love you guys, even if you scour the entire continent and dimension. You guys aren't even considered 'creatures.' Don't you agree? Who would love a thing that was created artificially? Who… *Ha… haha*. I don't even think that the beings who had assembled you guys even thought that way. *Pfft! Ha… Hahahaha!* (0/1)]

I felt bad for him because I was being *really* aggressive, and I felt like I had become the villain. Shit. If Seraphim were the protagonist, I was sure a supporting character would come out and say, *"That's not true! We weren't created artificially!"*

Seraphim would then become courageous and would obtain a reason to keep living, but he was the villain here, so there was no way that would happen.

Everyone capable of becoming a supporting character for him had already gone to a far-away place—no, perhaps it would be a bit too harsh for me to say that. He might commit suicide if I told him that.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest]

[Yes, you guys aren't loved by even the one who created you guys. Poor Seraphim. Our pitiful Seraphim. Do you want me to tell you why you guys are imitating humans? I'm not sure if this is the right answer, but this is what I think. I think you guys subconsciously believe that your creator will love you. Don't you think that's funny? (0/1)]

-…

Seraphim bit his lips. I'm sure he was really stressed because of himself and the fact that his judgment wasn't really working. I was bullying him with the facts as well, so I was sure he was mentally unstable at the moment.

I could see it in his quivering eyes, too, and it seemed like he had no idea what to do right now.

'That's not a good sign… '

I wasn't sure about anything else, but I knew for sure that he really wanted to kill me.

'I hope he hasn't lost it to the point that he can't even think about that. Still, I'm sure he learned a thing or two from the masked hero. If one gets slapped across the cheek, one should slap back rather than just quietly accept that slap, right?'

Seraphim was stupid, but he wasn't *that* stupid.

The moment he calmed down and returned to his senses, I could already see what kind of decision he would make. It would be a reasonable decision, after all.

I wasn't sure whether he was trying to meet my expectations or not, but I saw Seraphim taking deep breaths. He then looked at Kim Hyun-Sung and smiled.

'Yeah, that's what you were made to do.'

The stage had been created, and my assumption ended up being correct.

Seraphim spoke to Kim Hyun-Sung.

- You're pretty calm, you poor human.

'That's right.'

- I can't believe you're following the human who ruined everything, including your life and soul. You're really calm and composed despite that.

CHAPTER 758
TO THE END (16)

‘This fool finally did it. He finally got it.’

Seraphim smiled as if he had finally found a way to bring me down.

‘Yeah, you deserve to smile confidently.’

He started off on the wrong foot, but he finally realized his role.

It was no easy task, so I wanted to praise him for working so hard, but the problem was that I couldn’t do that right now because the best thing to do at the moment was to watch. He attacked first, but the build-up to this plan was arguably the most challenging part of the process. Why? Wasn't it pretty obvious?

‘Kim Hyun-Sung won’t believe him no matter what kind of nonsense he spits out. Who in their right mind will listen to him?’

There was no way Kim Hyun-Sung would believe me, even if I were to confess. If he were the same Kim Hyun-Sung from a few years ago, he would definitely grow suspicious of me, but our Light Hyun-Sung had already been purified by the sunset and the words of a young man.

In other words, I couldn't find any traces of negativity in his warm heart. The moment we came to an agreement in his subconscious world, he was convinced that I wasn’t the masked scum.

Even if his loyal subjects were to gather before his palace and start shouting, “Please consider the situation, Your Majesty! He’s a disloyal retainer who’s trying to bring you down!”

Kim Hyun-Sung wouldn't bat even an eyelid. In addition, he considered Seraphim his old rival, so of course, he wasn’t going to listen to Seraphim's nonsense.

‘It’s just a bunch of bullshit.’

Seraphim bit his lips as he was expecting Kim Hyun-Sung to look confused.

However, Seraphim definitely found it ridiculous how Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't showing any reaction at all, and it was to the point that he was questioning whether Kim Hyun-Sung was even listening to him.

'Wow… where do you even start? Raphim, what are you going to do about this?'

I was sure we had the same thoughts.

'There's not much you can do other than going with it. The battle has entered a state of lull anyway. You won't get this kind of opportunity again. Keep going. Don't give up now.'

- You really didn't know?

- I don't have time to answer your nonsense.

- I know who's ruining your life. I think you already know the truth; you're just denying it. Poor Kim Hyun-Sung. Poor regressor of Altanus. You know the truth, right?

'Actually, I don't think he knows. Can't you do better than that? What would he think if you talk like that?'

- Who's the masked man that's with us right now?

'Ah, I don't think this is going to work. You really suck at this. You're too vague, damn it.'

I was sure Kim Hyun-Sung wouldn't understand him, even if he were to explain one by one from the beginning, so I lost hope after hearing the way Seraphim was talking.

- We didn't offer our hand to him, Kim Hyun-Sung. He offered his hand to us. He wanted to join us. He said he could help us purify and manage mankind if we join hands. He told us that he was the chosen one and said he'd live in a world under our management. He said that the humans today are flawed, rotten, and tainted. He claimed that humans needed to be controlled, and they had to be instilled with new values…

'Yeah, keep it up. Keep going.'

Seraphim continued talking, but Kim Hyun-Sung looked as if he wasn't even listening.

- I'll recover my stamina real quick.

'Yeah, recover as much stamina as possible.'

Seraphim, who was speaking the truth, looked more desperate than Kim Hyun-Sung, who was listening to the truth. Seraphim wasn't exactly shouting at Kim Hyun-Sung to listen to him, but Seraphim seemed upset as he was talking.

At some point, the way he spoke changed. The tone of his voice was all over the place. I thought perhaps he was starting to show his true self, but that wasn't good news for me.

'Be more assertive. Shit, you need to talk with more confidence. What are you doing? You can't even look him in the eye, and you're being hesitant… You really think that'll make Kim Hyun-Sung listen?'

-…

- Just like that scummy masked man said, h-he looked like the ideal human to live on the new continent. He was devoted more than anyone else, innocent at times, and sometimes determined. He never hesitated in making decisions… a-a-and I think he understood us better than anyone else… No, I'm sure he understood us back then. He… I'm sure you know what happened after that, Kim Hyun-Sung.

-…

- He destroyed mankind. He pushed them to the edge. He took the archmage from mankind and divided them. He worked more passionately than anyone else on the task of reducing the population. You guys resisted, but there was nothing you guys could do. W-Who do you think was responsible for blocking your path and making you fall into despair every time you attempted to stand up?

-…

- I wasn't certain either, but I finally know. I finally know why he came to us and

destroyed mankind, no, the continent. I finally know his real goal, too.

'He's kind of rambling on, but he delivered that well. Didn't you learn how to speak from the masked hero?'

- He wanted a new start. He wanted everything to start from the beginning. He chose you. He dragged you into the plan of starting all over, Kim Hyun-Sung. After destroying the continent to the point that the gods managing the continent can't even restore it, he decided to use you as a chess piece. He tested you and gave those burdens to you.

'It's getting better. It'll get better if I keep supporting him, right?'

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[You… (0/1)]

I acted shocked for now so that he'd gain confidence. As expected, Seraphim gulped and relaxed after seeing my message. I wasn't sure if he was thinking that he had the advantage, but he was probably thinking it was a huge blow on me. I decided to send another message.

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Stop… (0/1)]

'Man, that was nice. Stop.'

- Everything he did was for his disgraceful greed, Kim Hyun-Sung. To him, you were the type of human he found easy to control. I know him better than you do. Think about it. Do you really think it's easy to turn someone into a regressor? Do you really think the gods managing this continent had taken that big risk just to turn you into a regressor? Why do you think you were the last one standing? Why do you think he was there wherever you went, and why did you even have to accept that great despair?

- How come bad things always happen to you, and why did everyone around you die one by one? Why do you think you have to restart everything from the beginning? Why do you think he's with you in your second life? Don't you find that strange?

[Creating an Average-rank Forced Quest.]

[Please stop… (0/1)]

- He was the most worried about his safety. He's not interested in anything else other than that. He isn't on anyone's side, nor is he anyone's ally. He's a horrible human who only thinks about himself.

'This bastard isn't that bad.'

He was doing a good job. He might be the type of individual that would do a great job once complimented. I couldn't say he had the gift of talking, but I could feel his sincerity. He was also quick-witted. The fact that he was saying all that without realizing the masked hero's true intentions and the details of how Kim Hyun-Sung became a regressor meant…

'He thought hard in trying to figure all of this out.'

- He chose you because of his greed. He's a demon controlling everyone and making them do the things he wants them to do. The masked man. Aren't you curious who that man is?

-…

- It's the one talking to you right now. The one giving you orders. Do you realize it now? Do you understand?

'No, I don't think he understands.'

I couldn't say that Seraphim was bad. I was kind of disappointed that he didn't take his time in explaining everything one by one, but this was better than nothing.

For now, it seemed like he was saying everything that was on his mind and in the end, he finally talked about the point of this conversation. He explained that I was the masked man and my goal had been to transform Kim Hyun-Sung into a regressor.

'I feel like he's also using his emotions to appeal to Kim Hyun-Sung.'

The problem was that Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't listening.

- I’m almost done recovering. Can I go back in, Mr. Ki-Young?

‘He’s just letting Seraphim’s words go through one ear and out the other. He has been listening, right?’

He was probably listening, but he probably thought that Seraphim's words weren’t worth listening to. He was possibly acting this way because of his strong belief in me.

‘Yeah, I wouldn’t believe him either. Who would believe that crazy pigeon when he’s rambling on in the middle of a battle?’

However, Kim Hyun-Sung needed to believe him, and I was sure he'd end up believing Seraphim. I felt kind of bad because he had to believe Seraphim's words.

‘I feel kind of uncomfortable that he’s talking about things outside of battle. It’s kind of morally wrong, but It makes it seem like I’m controlling and manipulating Hyun-Sung…’

Still, I could make this an exception, as it was for the greater good. The sight Kasugano Yuno showed was starting to come into view, so Kim Hyun-Sung had to realize something here.

‘He can be convinced.’

The Regressor Instruction Manual could control his emotions. The pros and cons didn’t matter because if I wanted him to do certain things, he’d have no choice but to do it.

“Okay, you can…”

'Let’s start with something small. It may seem odd if I suddenly make him do an important task, so let’s start by planting small suspicions in his head. It’s the same as that one time, Hyun-Sung. You had a tiny amount of suspicion before you came to an agreement with me while watching the sunset. I’ll plant that in your head.'

I could think of it as negative thoughts popping into his head after hearing Seraphim’s powerful speech.

- *Huh?*

Kim Hyun-Sung grabbed his head for a moment, looking really shocked. I don't know what kind of thought had popped into his head, but he probably saw the image of the masked hero and my face overlapping.

I decided to talk to him with the most innocent voice possible.

"What's wrong, Mr. Hyun-Sung?"

- I-It's… nothing. I'm sorry.

'I know it's not nothing. Seraphim, are you just going to watch? Say something.'

- Open your eyes and confront the truth, Kim Hyun-Sung. That man isn't the person you think he is.

-…

- You know that I'm speaking the truth.

- Shut up, Seraphim.

'There's progress.'

Unlike earlier, when Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't paying any attention to Seraphim, Seraphim's words were starting to offend him; things were going the way I expected.

Kim Hyun-Sung was scared right now. He was scared that Seraphim's logic was swaying him. He even started talking to me.

- Mr. Ki-Young… did you use some kind of spell that makes me feel mentally deranged…

"No, I haven't used any spells, Mr. Hyun-Sung. Is something wrong?" I asked.

- No, it's… nothing. I'm sorry, Mr. Ki-Young.

'What is he apologizing for? For doubting me? For not focusing on the current situation? If it's the former, you don't need to apologize. I'm technically not supposed to know that you're suspicious of me.'

Kim Hyun-Sung was shaking slightly, and he spoke again with a choked voice. He shook his head as if telling himself that he wouldn't have those thoughts again and continued the conversation.

- I'm really sorry. I… You see… I'm sorry.

I poured another spoon of suspicion into this confused mind.

'You're mentally okay, right, Hyun-Sung?'

However, it didn't take long for me to realize that he was feeling a deep sense of self-hatred. In the end, he started crying because he couldn't overcome that self-hatred.

CHAPTER 759
TO THE END (17)

'Is he mentally unstable?'

Hang in there, Kim Hyun-Sung.

'I really don't think he's doing well.'

I could tell he was confused, and a huge vortex of emotions that I couldn't describe was attacking our regressor. If I were to exaggerate a bit, I would say it was like tens of thousands of maggots were eating away at him.

He was hating himself, and he seemed really confused about the current situation.

I cringed because he seemed like he was exaggerating it, but…

"…"

'Maybe it's not strange… '

When I thought about what Kim Hyun-Sung had to go through just to get here, his reaction didn't seem strange to me anymore.

'He did go through a lot.'

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that his bond with Light Ki-Young was what helped him grow in this life both physically and mentally. I was *that man*, who was warmer than anyone else, and I was the light of light who had melted Kim Hyun-Sung's heart that was as cold as the fierce northern winds.

I was always at the center of every incident, and I was one of the few people Kim Hyun-Sung had a connection with. At one point, we had a misunderstanding, doubted each other, and became enemies, but in the end, we trusted each other more than anyone.

In other words, I made a massive contribution to his growth and his new personality.

It took a while, but Kim Hyun-Sung eventually realized that our relationship was sincere.

'Yeah, it's understandable he'd react that way.'

Our souls were connected, which helped get rid of all his suspicions. He was probably thinking if *he* was the scum. I couldn't imagine just how shocked he was when the doubt that he had already gotten rid of had reappeared in his head.

'Aren't I his savior? I basically saved his life. Actually, I saved him mentally. I'm the one who performed CPR on his mental health. Remember the look on his face when he first started this life? I basically saved him and cured him. I even paid for his hospital fees, but he's actually doubting me right now.

'In other words, it's not strange for him to feel ashamed.'

Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes were shaking, and he seemed confused about what he needed to do. I knew he was mentally weak, but he looked like someone who was going to collapse at any moment. The hand that was holding the sword was trembling, and he was forcing himself to bite his lips. He probably told himself that he needed to do this to stabilize his mind, as he was in the middle of something important.

'Is it okay to continue like this? We actually have the advantage in this war, but… '

"Mr. Hyun-Sung? Is something wrong?" I asked.

-…

"Mr. Hyun-Sung?" I called out.

- It's… It's nothing.

The key pigeons were already gone, and the troops' condition wasn't bad either.

However, what if Kim Hyun-Sung ended up having a mental breakdown?

The situation would change by then, but I wondered if making him have a mental breakdown was the right thing to do. He seemed so unstable that I started worrying

about unnecessary things, but…

'If this were going to be the end, I wouldn't have made this plan to begin with.'

If this were really the end, Lucifer and I wouldn't have a reason to make a meaningless bet. It was obvious, wasn't it?

'There's a reason that I have to do this.'

There was definitely more to come after this war.

Of course, I couldn't say for sure, but it was worth thinking about.

The pigeon Boss might appear after the pigeons were killed, or their parents might appear to avenge them. The continent might suddenly get destroyed, or something unimaginable to me might appear.

I knew it was an absurd thing to say, but I was shocked that I got into a contract with Lucifer and agreed to let Kim Hyun-Sung stab me.

'It's highly likely… that their creator might appear.'

The God of the Outer World. A truly flawless being.

If I were to be blunt, there was a high chance that we would have been blindsided by an unknown monster out there. I had no idea what kind of arrangements I had made, but I wasn't gutsy enough to ignore that.

I was in a dilemma, but there was nothing I could do about it.

I wasn't a psychopath, so I was worried about our regressor's mental health, but it was too late.

"Too late to back out," I said.

We had already crossed the bridge, and as one question led to another, someone was enjoying all this.

- Do you remember now?

-…

- You're just denying it, Kim Hyun-Sung. Don't you think it'll be better if you just accept it? He's not your savior. He's a demon who's been wringing and squeezing your soul out.

-…

- I think it's best if you ask him yourself. That demon has you in the palm of his hand and is thinking about what to do with you right now.

'I do feel kind of guilty about that.'

- Actually, don't bother asking. You already know the answer. Your face says it all… Am I wrong?

'He's in his element.'

Although it was funny seeing him mistakenly think that his words were getting through to Kim Hyun-Sung, it was an undeniable fact that he was being helpful, so I decided to help him as well.

"Mr. Hyun-Sung? Are you…"

- It's nothing to worry about, Mr. Ki-Young. Don't worry about it, Mr. Ki-Young… I-I've recovered my strength, so I'll…

- Feigning ignorance won't make it go away. Ask yourself this: who has been controlling your life all this while? Who do you despise the most? Who was the one responsible for slaughtering your comrades and the humans on the continent? Who was responsible for destroying your soul?

- Who has been controlling and manipulating you? Who has been deceiving you? Ask yourself those questions.

I should add another spoon of doubt.

- S-Shut up.

- Open your eyes and realize your true enemy!

- Shut… Shut up!!!

Kim Hyun-Sung rushed toward Seraphim with his sword in hand.

The two immediately started fighting each other, but it was useless.

Seraphim thought of this situation as a chance to bring me down, and Kim Hyun-Sung was being swayed. Kim Hyun-Sung was no longer listening to my orders, as I could see his movements becoming erratic. However, he was suppressing Seraphim, so clearly, he hadn't lied when he told me that he had recovered physically.

'Shit, what if he ends up killing Seraphim?'

Seraphim's death was inevitable, but Seraphim had to do his part first before dying. He needed to make Kim Hyun-Sung confirm the suspicion in his head. There was a small problem, and it was that…

'Ah… this is harder than I thought.'

It was easier said than done to make Kim Hyun-Sung suspicious of me again.

- I… *Heuk…* have never thought of those things.

"Mr. Hyun-Sung?" I called out.

- Please believe me. I have never had those kinds of thoughts. I-It's… true… *Kgh*…

It sounded like he was talking to himself rather than saying it to me.

- I-I think… someone is inside my head. S-Something is off, Mr. Ki-Young.

"I don't think—"

- Get out of my head! *Heuk*… You bastard! You dirty bastard!

'I think I'm the one inside your head… '

- *Heuk…* No! No! No!

- Open your eyes, Kim Hyun-Sung!

- Shut up! Shut uuup!!! It's not true. No! Get out of my head! Shit! Get out, Lucifer!!!

'It's not Lucifer. It's me.'

Kim Hyun-Sung swung his sword haphazardly, and it seemed like he was fighting the *thing* inside his head rather than Seraphim. He looked so pitiful that I couldn't really describe how he looked right now, and honestly, I couldn't look at him right now.

- I have never doubted you. I… never did. Really.

'Are you sure you're okay?'

It seemed like he was resisting the Regressor Instruction Manual, and I honestly didn't think that was even possible.

- *Heuk… kgh…*

'Don't resist it, Hyun-Sung. Accept it. Say something, you crazy pigeon.'

- Accept it, Kim Hyun-Sung!

'You're making your goal too obvious by using that line, man.'

I was trying my best to have expectations for Seraphim, but it was pretty hard.

Kim Hyun-Sung stopped moving when I added another spoon of doubt.

'Don't resist, damn it.'

I was starting to feel desperate because I thought Kim Hyun-Sung would break down soon.

And that was when I saw him grab his left horn…

- Shit! Shit!

'What are you doing?'

"What are you doing… Hey…" I mumbled.

- Damn it… damn it!

“You crazy bastard! What do you think you’re doing?!” I shouted.

- Shit!!!

Kim Hyun-Sung didn’t answer, but I knew what he was trying to do. He channeled strength into his arms, and I heard a grotesque noise.

Kim Hyun-Sung rarely made sounds when he was in pain, but he released a creepy scream. I didn’t feel any pain, but I could tell how much pain he was in. However, he didn’t stop.

Seraphim frowned while staring at Kim Hyun-Sung.

He seemed to empathize with Kim Hyun-Sung’s pain.

“Stop it, you crazy bastard! Stop!” I yelled.

Goosebumps broke out all over me and in the end…

Crack!

He ripped off his left horn.

- *Haa… haa… haa…*

Blood poured incessantly from the hole, drenching half of his face in blood. It was an unrealistic sight. I unknowingly frowned and became anxious.

Kim Hyun-Sung started mumbling while covered in sweat.

- G-Get out of my head, Lucifer. I never doubted… I…

“You crazy…”

- I… never doubted him. Trust me. I-I have doubted him before, but not now. Believe me. Believe me. Trust me. Trust me…

‘Shit… what happened? Is it really okay to continue like this? Is there no other way?’

- I know now. Now…

'What should I do? Shit… shit… What should I do? Damn it… damn it… I didn't think it would turn out this way. I never imagined things would turn out like this. Seriously… '

Kim Hyun-Sung was still resisting the suspicion in his head. However, what he had done didn't make his suspicion disappear, so he grabbed his right horn.

- G-Get out of my head right now, Lucifer!

'What do I do? What… what… Shit, what am I supposed to do? Damn it.'

- Get ouuuuuu… *Ugh… Ack!*

"*Aaaaah!! Aaaaahhhh! Acccccccccck! Aaaaaah! Aaaaah! Acccck! AAAAHHH!*"

Kim Hyun-Sung suddenly stopped moving.

CHAPTER 760
TO THE END (18)

"*Ahhhhhhhhh! Ahhhhhhhhh!*"

Kim Hyun-Sung was having a hard time pulling out his other horn.

"*Acccccck… Ah… Ahh… Heuk… Ahhh!*"

Kim Hyun-Sung's face turned pale. He seemed like he still hadn't come back to his senses, but he was reacting to my screams because his eyes widened.

"*Ah… ugh… ahh…*"

'Shit, you bastard.'

I was hoping that my realistic screams and painful cries managed to reach him. He still seemed out of it, but it didn't take long for him to realize what was going on.

'Yeah, you're probably right.'

I was sure Kim Hyun-Sung would soon realize that I was just lying when I told him that I could adjust pain sensitivity. Yes, he was famous for being slow-witted, but I believed he would be able to catch on to this.

I was being considerate because I was afraid that he wouldn't be able to focus on the battle, and *I* made the sacrifice of enduring pain so that I wouldn't get in his way. As expected, he flinched. However, the fact that he was still filled with despair made it hard for him to talk.

- M-Mr. Ki-Young?

"…"

- A-Are you okay, Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young?

‘Has he come back to his senses?’

I honestly couldn’t tell.

It could’ve just been his reflexes, so I decided to remain quiet for now. It wouldn't make sense for me to talk calmly after getting hit by an immense amount of pain. It took some time for me to figure out which choice was the right answer because I needed to stop Kim Hyun-Sung from turning into a semi-disabled person.

I was *that* desperate as well…

It was hard to describe the pain he was feeling.

Of course, there was physical pain, but…

‘You shouldn’t try to resolve problems like that.’

'Don’t hurt yourself and pull your horns like that. What are you going to do if things don’t work out after doing that? Are you going to pull out your wings, too? What if that doesn’t do anything either?'

What he had been doing and what he was trying to do wouldn't help.

One shouldn't do such things to resolve an issue.

'Man, it would be a lot better if you just accept it. You can’t do anything about the suspicion that’s sprouting inside of you.'

‘Anyway, I need to suppress him so that he can’t think about anything else or do stupid things. It’ll be kind of hard, but I have to do it.’

Actually, it wasn’t that hard at all because I was just doing what demons would do to corrupt human beings. They would keep digging into the human’s weakest and vulnerable parts.

Once the human could no longer resist, they would devour them completely. The only difference between me and a demon was that I was doing this to protect Kim Hyun-Sung, but a demon's method would definitely work here.

What was the source of Kim Hyun-Sung's suffering? It was pretty obvious. Guilt? I

just had to drag him down to an even darker place. I could do that by pretending that I was in pain and then pretending that I was okay immediately afterward.

"*Ah… haa… ah…*"

- A-Are you okay? M-Mr. Ki-Young? Just now…

"*Haa… ugh… ah…*"

- Mr. Ki-Young… the pain… the pain… *Ah*… I… I…

"*Ah…*"

-…

"I'm okay, so… don't… worry about me," I mumbled.

- What? Okay… *um…* Okay… *Heuk…*

"I don't know what happened, but… I'll head there right now. I don't feel anything right now… If… If something really is wrong… I think I should… check your condition myself," I suggested.

- H-How's your head?

"It's been a while since I changed the pain sensitivity, so don't worry. *Haa… haa…* A-are you… okay, Mr. Hyun-Sung? I-I think it's best if you leave that place for now. Some kind of magic that affects the mind might actually have… *Heuk…* Mr. Hyun-Sung…" I mumbled.

- Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young?

"…"

'I'm completely fine. Are you sure you're okay?'

- I… I… *Heuk…*

'He's so used to the pain that he's acting like he's fine.'

- I-I'm fine. *Heuk…*

I was right. I didn't have to influence him to make him do the things I wanted him to do. He pulled out the horns on his head to resist Lucifer, but it was an act of self-harm. He had harmed himself, but he was harming me as well.

As expected, I felt Kim Hyun-Sung slowly falling into despair.

Kim Hyun-Sung had no idea what to do now that the method to calm him down could no longer be used. He was about to place his hand on his head, but he stopped and started falling into despair. He couldn't do anything other than cry.

The Kim Hyun-Sung, who had achieved a certain level of growth, was no longer there; the one who had escaped Lucifer's grasp and became a hero was no longer here. He was like a sandcastle that would crumble at the slightest touch.

He continued looking around, and I noticed his trembling lips and tears.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked like a mess, and he couldn't even speak properly.

"I… I… believe you, Mr. Hyun-Sung," I said.

My words caused him to collapse.

Fwooooooooosh.

'Now.'

This is an easy task. Messing with him a bit while his defenses were down was a really easy task.

'Let's cut ties.'

I just needed to destroy our bond. Our regressor was resisting because he didn't want to destroy our bond. I'd make it so that he would barely remember the things we experienced together. Actually, I decided to just destroy Kim Hyun-Sung's feelings for me and our bond.

He couldn't feel guilty about me. Was it possible? It was possible. His wall had already been destroyed, after all?

‘Is this really necessary?’

Anything that would make me uneasy couldn't be used, and I was sure that was the right move based on Kim Hyun-Sung’s current condition.

The bond between us had to disappear, or he wouldn't be able to stab me.

Even if he were to accept the fact that I was the masked hero, he wouldn't be able to harm me because of our relationship. I had to make that variable vanish.

'Look at him. I’m sure that’s what he’ll do. He’ll hesitate, deny, and drop his sword in the end.'

‘But… ’

There were no buts. This was the only way.

I dug deeper into his head and plucked out the moments when he felt close to me, starting from the tutorial dungeon.

- N-No.

Yes.

“I’m Kim Hyun-Sung.”

From the beginning…

We had already done this before, but watching it like this made it seem like I was watching it in a panoramic view.

“Personally, I think choosing from Summoner, Alchemist, and Black Mage is the best, but it’s difficult for me to recommend Black Mage. I can’t say it with certainty, but you could end up being in a dangerous situation because the status window never lies to us.”

I was sure he enjoyed our quarrels over my job.

‘…’

I enjoyed it as well. Back then, I thought Alchemist was the best job, but I was convinced that I got tricked. Shit, I thought Black Mage or Leader would have been nice. Ramus Tucker's Introduction to Alchemy had baited me into picking Alchemist.

Was this guy *really* thinking that I had made the best choice? Really?

"A-Are you… thinking about going somewhere else?"

"You can't go somewhere else, o-oppa!"

"I'm not going away. I want to stay with you guys and Mr. Hyun-Sung as well. What do you guys think?"

"I agree. This strange place has brought us together, and I want to stay with you, Mr. Deok-Gu, and Miss Ha-Yan."

I told you that I would make you rich when we joined the Blue Guild. Back then, I was in such a rush that I just went for it without looking around me. Whenever Deok-Gu wasn't with us, we would say that it was more fun when the four of us were together. Did you feel the same way? Was this memory fake? You didn't like me back then, right?

"You don't need to apologize, Mr. Ki-Young."

"What?"

"You did nothing wrong. Actually, even if you did something wrong, Miss Yoo-Ra doesn't have the right to point out your mistake. You're a member of the Blue Guild's party. If I thought you made a mistake, I would've told you first. I don't know why Miss Yoo-Ra had a problem with our party members, but it honestly makes me mad."

You told me this during our first dungeon raid and even I thought you looked cool back then.

"The gift I prepared for our guild master is this griffon."

"Ah!"

Did you like it that much? You were crazy about the griffon.

“I’m thinking about appointing Miss Hye-Jin as the guild’s secretary…”

“Mr. Hyun-Sung… you can forget what I said, as it was just my personal opinion. If you think Miss Hye-Jin fits this role, then don’t worry about me and do as you wish. Ah! I’m telling you this just in case, but there’s no misunderstanding between us. I completely understand why you would think that way, though.”

Kim Hyun-Sung *really* was a wreck back then.

Many more memories fleeted across me. The memories were out of order, but they were all moments when Kim Hyun-Sung felt close to me. There were even things I couldn't remember. They were very trivial memories, but they were memories of times when we ate or drank together and had silly conversations.

Of course, he had memories of those big incidents, too.

“Kill me.”

I feel kind of embarrassed seeing it now. Wait, Kim Hyun-Sung looked pretty cool.

“Give him back, you bastard.”

“Didn’t you hear me?”

“Give him back…”

“You’re like a parrot.”

“Give him back… Give him back!!! Damn it! You bastard!!!”

Let’s stop watching that one. The one incident before this one was awesome, though.

“Being a human being feels strange. Everything is in ruins, but… it kind of looks pretty and mysterious. The red sunset…”

Yeah, this.

“Damn it! You know nothing! What do you know?! Shit… shit! Stop imitating him. Stop it. Damn it! Don’t come here looking like that and force me to carry those burdens! Stop it! I never said I wanted to start all over, and I never told you that I wanted to do all of

this again!

'Just leave me alone. Please just stop! Leave me alone! Don't force me to carry those burdens anymore, you bastards! Don't… force me… damn it…"

"…"

"Please don't even think about it… please… please don't. Please don't make me remember it… I'm tired of it now. Please don't… Don't make me remember anything…"

"…"

"Please stop… please… please don't put those burdens on me while looking like him…"

This was your final straw, right? I feel sad thinking about it now.

"No one has ever told you to take responsibility, and no one has any right to tell you that. I understand that people's expectations can feel a bit burdensome sometimes and that it's difficult to endure things when they're too heavy to bear. There's no need to feel stressed all by yourself. We can carry the weight together,"

"…"

"I'll take responsibility."

I basically raised Kim Hyun-Sung, and there were more instances like this than I thought. Shopping for bags? *Ah*, shit. Being locked up for two weeks? The night strolls? Are you kidding me? Are you serious? The Doom Hyun-Sung incident was pretty big. You really didn't like Rafael, but once this was over, you two might have to start working together.

I dug deeper and deeper until I stumbled upon the smallest memories…

There were too many of them, but it didn't matter because they were just fleeting moments.

"Mr. Ki-Young?"

Yes?

“I believe in you.”

Shit, me too.

“That’s because I knew you would carry the burden with me.”

But you ended up running away…

“I’m sorry.”

You apologize too much. Don’t do things you feel sorry about doing.

“Stop it! Stop! Stop making me take responsibility! No more! Mr. Ki-Young! Get out of there! Get out! Stop… Heuk… Stop it. What more do you want? What more do you want…”

Stop crying, damn it. Why are you crying so much?

“I’m such a fool.”

That’s not true.

“I hope you’ll accept it. It’s my way of apologizing, and I’m sure this item will come in handy.”

You gave me a bag that cost 800,000 Gold. I wouldn’t say you’re a fool, and…

“I…”

“…”

“I-I’m a regressor.”

I’m proud of you, man. You’re the regressor of Altanus that I chose myself.

Fwoooosh!

I saw a myriad of scenes in the blink of an eye.

When I came to my senses, I saw Kim Hyun-Sung standing with a blank stare.

It had been a while since he stopped crying. He no longer seemed confused, and he wasn't trying to pull out his horn anymore. I wasn't sure whether this was the right description, but his unfocused eyes were filled with indescribable anger.

"*Haa…* It's over," I mumbled.

CHAPTER 761
TO THE END (19)

“…”

“…”

‘It’s really *is over.’*

To be exact, I didn't really erase Kim Hyun-Sung's memories because I couldn't erase everything that had happened in this life.

Without events, there would be no growth.

What I had erased were his feelings for me and our bond.

It was kind of hard to explain, but he probably wouldn't feel much emotion about the series of incidents that had happened between us. He could be nonchalant about it, or perhaps he might think that he no longer needed to remember them.

I had erased all of his personal feelings toward me.

“…”

I didn’t know what to say about it, but it didn’t feel good because Kim Hyun-Sung wasn’t the only one making memories. There was a saying that the people who had been left behind would suffer more than the deceased.

Of course, it was situational, and I did it myself. Still, I couldn't help but feel dejected.

‘I have no choice but to accept it. Isn’t it more important to think about what I would gain rather than what I had lost?’

I could recover what I had lost once all of this was over. I wasn’t the type to hold on to things like this, so I didn’t need to think deeply about it.

'Alright, let's think positive thoughts. Sadness will only bring me bad luck. Everything is going according to plan, and I had already cut off every possible variable. Nothing unexpected should come up. Everything is going my way, so I should be happy, right?'

I was smiling, and I soon laughed.

'Everything is going the way I wanted. That's what's important.'

There weren't any problems, so this was good news.

I thought about telling Ji-Hye noona about this, but I was sure she was busy as well.

Perhaps I didn't have to tell her, as she was filming a drama with Hye-Jin. I wonder what Deok-Gu was doing. *Ah*, he was probably fighting the pigeons right now. Ha-Yan… she had to be in the middle of battle as well. Oh, she had recovered her mana.

I looked around the situation room, but it was empty. I raised my glass to celebrate. The war wasn't over yet, so it was too early to celebrate, but this was great.

Ah, I should be checking on our regressor's condition.

I immediately saw Kim Hyung-Sung's angry face.

'He's really angry.'

It was a really simple emotion compared to when he was having mixed feelings.

Simple was the best.

I wondered whether that was what Kim Hyun-Sung looked like in his past life. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that to him, his first life was everything to him in this life.

If it hadn't been for what he had experienced in his first life, Kim Hyun-Sung wouldn't have been the same person in this life.

'Maybe not?'

The ongoing situation was difficult to assess, but one thing I was sure of was that he was no longer resisting the voice in his head.

Kim Hyun-Sung had decided to accept it and confirm it. It had been confirmed, and it was no longer a suspicion. He had already confirmed that I was the masked man in his past life.

'That's not all.'

This would snowball into many changes.

The memories he cherished like treasures were getting distorted. It was understandable, as he believed that everything had been a lie. He was definitely thinking that way.

He was probably looking back at each and every memory, thinking that he had been a fool. I was sure he was angry at himself as well. However, his anger was no longer born from self-hatred. He was angry that his archenemy had tricked him again. I was worried that he was going to curse at me or disconnect the call, but it looked like I was worried for nothing. Before I could say anything, Seraphim started talking first.

- What have you realized?

-…

- You look like you've realized something. What are you angry about?

-…

- *Ha… Haha. Hahahaha.*

'You did great, Seraphim. However, I hate your laugh.'

- *Hahahaha!*

Kim Hyun-Sung didn't answer. Instead, he immediately threw his sword.

- *Uh…*

A line made out of blood was drawn on Seraphim's cheek; Kim Hyun-Sung swung his sword once again, and the two continued the battle without saying anything.

'What is going on?'

I wanted to keep giving him orders, but the turn of events was so unexpected that I found it a bit hard to react. However, it didn't last long because I immediately realized why he acted that way just now. The pigeon was his enemy anyway, and in the end…

"Mr. Hyun-Sung?" I called out.

- Yes, Mr. Ki-Young?

'Your voice sounds kind of cold, man. You have no emotions. It's like you're talking to a stranger. Your voice isn't like before.'

"Your… condition… Are you feeling better?" I asked.

- I feel better than before, but… my head is still…

"What?"

- I know this is rude of me to ask, but I would like for you to come here and… take a look for yourself.

'I think I told him that I would go there, but shit. Kim Hyun-Sung, you snake… you've really made up your mind.'

I immediately realized that he didn't actually want me to go there to look at his condition.

'You're luring me in. Do you really consider me as your enemy now?'

In Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes, the masked hero was an unpredictable bastard. Things would become more problematic later if I were to refuse.

He had to have decided to call me over and end it by tearing me to pieces…

'Huh?'

'No, don't tear me to pieces.'

Why was I even thinking that way?

‘Slicing my head off is kind of scary, too. Why do I keep having these violent thoughts? Slicing me to pieces? Are you going to chop off my arms and legs so that I will have no choice but to crawl on the ground, and then you'll end me by crushing me with your foot?’

“Actually, there’s something I need to—”

- Please, I need you right now.

‘You think it's best to cripple me and throw me into the pigsty?!’

This bastard was definitely a psychopath. Who would think of something like that? We had made so many memories, so I thought that would be too much of him.

'That’s too harsh, man.'

A brief silence descended upon us, and the negative thoughts that filled Kim Hyun-Sung’s head disappeared. It seemed like he was considering all possibilities.

He was wary that his ideas would get leaked by the Regressor Instruction Manual.

I had never told him about the possibility that I would know his thoughts and emotions, but he was already wary of the possibility that I could deduce his thoughts.

He was really taking into account the many possibilities.

“I’ll head there now,” I said.

- Be careful…

‘I know that, Hyun-Sung. However, this is really out of character. I think this is poor acting, as the Kim Hyun-Sung that I know will never ask me to go to him. Honestly, it’s more like I'm pretending to fall for it.’

After checking that the anesthesia potion was still in my pocket, I stood up.

- Mr. Ki-Young?

“I’m getting ready,” I replied.

It was better to get there at the right time.

Kim Hyun-Sung continued swinging his sword, and it didn't take long for Seraphim to be covered in wounds.

It actually felt like Kim Hyun-Sung was pacing himself, waiting for me to arrive. He acted like he was being pushed back and even held his head once in a while. He was showing that he had issues. There wasn't an ounce of sincerity in his behavior, but he seemed to be doing his best.

The problem was that I couldn't see any signs. I thought the end was near, but I couldn't see the scenery that Kasugano Yuno had shown to me. Everything had yet to fall into place. It was an undeniable fact that we were getting closer, but I had no idea what I had to do to complete that scene.

'Is it not time yet?'

Perhaps I should think about it once I was there.

The two started talking again.

- Join me, Kim Hyun-Sung. I can give you a new life.

-…

He'd never join you.

- There was no need for us to fight. Don't you agree?

- Shut up, Seraphim.

- You knew that you guys didn't have a chance of winning in the first place. What are you fighting for?

- I'm not here to play games with you.

- I'm not saying this to play games with you, either. I'm saying it because there seems to be a misunderstanding. I'm trying to tell you that our fight wasn't intentional. A war that leads to endless destruction wasn't what we wanted. It's the parasite that created that kind of situation.

- I have never agreed to your ways in the first place.

- You're right, but you know it's needed. The continent is sick. Do you really think that we came here for no reason at all? I'm sure you've realized many things in the middle of this new life. Am I wrong? Tell me. Have humans ever changed?

-…

- No, because humans will never change. Like the man you know, their essence will never change.

-…

- I'm giving you a chance, Kim Hyun-Sung. You can still go back. You've been tainted, but you can be purified. You don't even consider yourself human, do you?

- Bullshit.

'That scum is lying.'

Seraphim disliked Kim Hyun-Sung. I didn't know exactly what he thought about the regressor, but I was sure he hated Kim Hyun-Sung.

The pigeons were hostile toward the powers that the demons possessed, and Kim Hyun-Sung had been tainted to the point that he was covered by demonic power.

Seraphim was incredibly proud of his Judgment Sword, so it was easy to deduce that he was just talking bullshit in order to fool himself and Kim Hyung-Sung.

'You wanted to bring me down that bad, huh?'

Seraphim started acting that way because he wanted to make me mad.

If that weren't the reason…

- Our Creator wants you.

'What?'

- Our Creator wants you, Kim Hyun-Sung.

'That came out of nowhere.'

Actually, that wasn't true.

'Was this… calculated? Was he considering this as well?'

I was surprised.

'Was this really part of his plan? Shit.'

Was this his goal? The creator of the pigeons might have created these fools because it wanted managers with no emotions. Although he wasn't perfect, the current Kim Hyun-Sung…

"Is pretty powerful…" I mumbled.

And that when a massive beam of light pervaded the sky…

The light looked strange, but it was so brilliant that I couldn't quite describe it.

At this point, only a fool wouldn't realize what was going on.

'I was right. Haa… shit… I was right.'

That is the reason the final puzzle piece existed, and I had to sacrifice because of that.

The strange and large light created an oddly-shaped arm, and it was reaching out slowly toward Kim Hyun-Sung.

The Creator of the Outer World wasn't here, so…

"We… had to call it here…" I said.

Calling it here was part of our task.

I wasn't sure whether this was going to be a good ending or a bad ending, but cutting ties with Kim Hyun-Sung was necessary to reach the ending.

"I was right."

CHAPTER 762
TO THE END (20)

I wasn’t wrong, and I was relieved to know that. It felt kind of rewarding knowing that everything I had done so far wasn’t in vain. All the puzzle pieces didn’t fall into place, but the puzzle pieces I had saved were starting to create a picture.

‘This was the first condition.’

The first condition was making the Creator of the pigeons come here.

If there weren't an enemy we needed to fight, all of this wouldn’t have started in the first place. I had no idea why Lee Ki-Young didn’t know about the Creator before losing his memory, but I knew that the Creator could be dealt with through Lucifer’s intervention.

The fact that I had just confirmed that made me feel better.

‘I can trust you, right? Lee Ki-Young, you traitor.’

I still didn’t know why this was hidden from me, but…

‘Maybe because the future might get ruined if I know.’

Otherwise…

‘I can say that memory loss is one of the conditions of the bet.’

That was my best guess.

For now, it wasn’t an important puzzle piece, so I decided to think about it later.

Of course, it was a piece of information that supported my assumption.

The important thing was that Seraphim’s creator had appeared, and we needed to take care of it. I nodded to myself and turned my head to find a strange, horrible

light.

The light that the Creator was releasing was so strange that I immediately understood why it was called the God of the Outer World.

The troops that were fighting stared at the sky, realizing that something was happening.

I was sure it wasn't just the troops. The denizens in other regions were staring at that light. The light that covered the sky not only illuminated the entire battlefield but it was also expanding its reach.

I stared at the light, too.

I couldn't help but look at the light.

The light possessed something that overwhelmed humans. The majority of people probably had no idea what that light was, but I was sure they were thinking that they couldn't resist the light and that they couldn't fight it.

How did I know? It was because I felt the same way.

Could we really fight that? Could that thing even be called a "creature"? Could that thing even think? How could it communicate? What in the world was that?

There were so many strange things, and I had so many questions.

It seemed like it was alive, but it didn't seem like a "living" being.

They were different from humans, but even the pigeons lived and breathed like us.

However, I couldn't feel it from *that* thing.

It was no different from looking at a storm or huge waves or distant waves at sea.

It seemed like it had a mind of its own, but I wasn't certain.

I couldn't really describe it, but to me, it looked like…

'It looks like chunks of the system.'

It just looked like chunks of the system rather than the creator of the pigeons. It wasn't moving based on its thoughts. What if it was moving based on instinct? It could be moving because it was programmed to move that way.

It wasn't exactly the god I had imagined, but…

'It's definitely a transcendental being.'

The large, mysterious arm wriggled and stretched its hand toward Kim Hyun-Sung, making it look even more strange.

-…

- Grab the Creator's hand. Your sins will be forgiven if you do that.

'Seraphim, you dumb bastard.'

'I don't think that thing created you guys. Have you guys never considered the possibility that perhaps you guys were just born out of that thing? No matter how you look at it, it just looks like chunks of the system.

'It has no will, so it didn't appear here on its own. It can't influence anything on its own.'

It probably reacted to Kim Hyun-Sung because Seraphim had made the decision and stretched his hand out toward him. Seraphim had simply activated the program installed inside of him. Just like how Lee Ji-Hye was running the dummy world, the system inside Seraphim was reacting to the variable.

I had no idea why that system was made, and I also had no idea why it even existed, but it was highly likely that the system wanted whatever the Four Angels wanted.

Seraphim said their Creator wanted to find a nest they could settle down in, and it desired balance on the continent.

The program inside Seraphim had created the pigeons because of that desire, and they traveled to different dimensions to find a place where it could take root.

That was how Kim Hyun-Sung's first life began, and Kim Hyun-Sung failed because of the masked hero's plan.

I was sure the pigeons were affected by his failure, but that wasn't the case for the system.

If the system were to fail, they would need to modify it.

After figuring out where the error had come from, I was sure they'd fix it.

I was sure they'd check to see what went wrong and run the program once again. That was the situation right now. The system had failed because of the pigeons, and it was trying to find an alternative solution.

'That alternative solution is… '

Kim Hyun-Sung, but a slightly different version of him.

Kim Hyun-Sung had yet to abandon his humanity, but the system thought he would do it. The system believed that Kim Hyun-Sung could make the continent and the dimensions complete, and then he would become a god capable of perfectly executing the program that the system wanted to execute.

However, Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't going to join it.

'There's no way he would join it.'

He was fated to resist his enemies, not join them.

He was hostile toward me but standing on the same side as the pigeons…

'…doesn't make sense at all.'

- What will I get out of it?

'See, our Hyun-Sung is an upright person—Wait, what?'

- Answer me, Seraphim. What will I gain if I grab this hand?

'Huh?'

- *Pfft… Hahahahaha!*

- I didn’t ask so I could make you laugh, Seraphim. Answer me.

‘What are you doing?’

“Mr. Hyun-Sung?” I called out.

He didn’t answer. I didn’t know what he was thinking, and I couldn’t read his condition either.

- Who knows? That depends on what you want. I can’t tell you exactly what you’ll get out of it, but one thing I’m sure of is that whatever you want, it will come true. You can get what you want as long as our Creator allows it.

- I don’t agree with your crazy plan to kill half the humans on the continent…

- We can find another way. Killing them isn’t the only way to adjust the population, you know.

‘The new human race plan. Is he going to plagiarize me?’

- I don’t know why our Creator chose you, but…

‘It chose Hyun-Sung because you guys are incompetent.’

- It will grant you a lot of power.

It would entrust Kim Hyun-Sung its power rather than grant it.

It was a process so that its program could take root on the continent.

- Can I change the continent?

- As I told you, it's possible if that’s what you want.

‘What the hell are you doing? Did I do something wrong? Was this not it?’

Had I failed to take into account the possibility that Kim Hyun-Sung might side with the pigeons after losing his feelings and bond for me?

‘There’s nothing he can get out of this, damn it… ’

Actually, there was no reason for him to reject the offer.

He wouldn't get anything out of it, but it wouldn’t be too bad for him either.

Hadn't Kim Hyun-Sung chosen to fight the Outer God with all his might because he wanted to protect those he cherished?

He was probably thinking that if he could *really* control the situation, then the worst-case scenario might not come true.

I wasn't sure whether that could be considered as giving his burden to someone else, but if it were me, I would think of it as a good trade.

- Grab its hand, Kim Hyun-Sung.

‘No, don’t grab its hand, damn it. Shit… ’

I had no idea what Kim Hyun-Sung was thinking right now. I could somewhat feel his emotions because of the effects of the Regressor Instruction Manual, but I had no idea why he was even contemplating the idea of grabbing its hand.

I stood up urgently.

“Mr. Hyun-Sung!” I called out.

The script had to be followed.

Kim Hyun-Sung taking the Outer God's side didn't exist in the script.

I headed outside and heard various voices.

I heard someone calling for me, but I couldn't answer them. I spread my wings and immediately started flying. A battle was happening around me, but I was too busy to worry about them.

Booooooooooooooom!

-…

‘You’re not seriously thinking about joining them, are you?’

That thing was made out of chunks of the system.

It was just a monster—nothing more, nothing less.

- You can get whatever you want.

BOOM!

A deafening explosion echoed, and I was blasted away. I took a direct hit from something unknown, but it was a good thing my protective spells activated in time.

I was fine, but I fell to the ground.

Of course, I immediately rolled away and stood up.

“Father Lee Ki-Young?”

“It’s Father Lee Ki-Young! Father Lee Ki-Young is…”

“Protect him!”

‘Sorry, I don’t have time for this.’

I spread my wings again and took to the sky.

Before I knew it, layers of protection spells enveloped me.

‘I’m heading there right now, so don’t mess things up… ’

Even I thought that I was moving pretty fast.

I thought I was receiving buffs while flying, but I couldn’t check each and every one. The dragons fired Dragon Breath to open up a path for me, and I thought I heard the guild members' voices.

I even heard Sun Hee-Young and Elena’s voices, and they had to be the reason why I was still fine despite getting bombarded with spells.

I eventually saw Kim Hyun-Sung.

The strange light still had its hand out toward Kim Hyun-Sung.

Seraphim noticed that I was getting closer.

“Mr. Hyun-Sung!” I shouted.

However, the moment I saw his eyes…

“*Ha…*”

“…”

‘Ah, I got tricked.’

I realized that he had tricked me.

‘He had no intentions of grabbing its hand. Shit, how did I even fall for this? I should have known that he wouldn't do such a thing. I actually overlooked his upright personality. Ah… ’

I had to come here anyway, but the fact that I got lured here made me feel speechless.

My head throbbed in pain at the thought that Kim Hyun-Sung had just stabbed me in the back.

A sharp pain struck the back of my leg.

Before I could scream, I suddenly felt weightless.

“Scummy bastard.”

Kim Hyun-Sung was looking down at me with a grimace.

“Hyun… Sung—” I mumbled, but a pair of rough hands choked me.

“*Cough… cough…*”

“You dirty, wicked, and disgusting… scum,” Kim Hyun-Sung cursed.

“*Cough…*”

“What should I do, you dirty bastard?” Kim Hyun-Sung questioned.

“*Cough…*”

“How should I kill you?”

CHAPTER 763
TO THE END (21)

When I first saw the future, the first thing I was worried about was whether Kim Hyun-Sung would be able to harm me. I came up with various assumptions because if he couldn't stab me, I had to make him stab me.

From revealing the truth that I was the masked hero to acting like the masked scum Lee Ki-Young of his past life, I had come up with a ton of ideas, including coming up with a list of inciting lines.

They weren't simple inciting lines. Those words were a mockery of his principles and even his dead comrades. I was kind of sad that I couldn't use those lines, but I had more important things to worry about right now.

It wasn't just getting stabbed by his sword.

Kim Hyun-Sung was thinking about killing me in the most painful way possible.

He was going to cut off my limbs and torture me using every single torture method out there. I couldn't help but think that he was getting a bit *too* experimental.

'His imagination is so good that he can probably work as a heretic inquisitor. I really am not used to this side of him.'

I was scared, but it wasn't because Kim Hyun-Sung was choking me.

I was scared because the transcendental being before me was emitting a hostility that made it hard for me to breathe. Kim Hyun-Sung just had to put his strength into his hands, and my weak neck would shatter in seconds. No, it wouldn't just break. My neck would probably disintegrate like tofu.

I could tell he was being cautious and was trying to calm down as much as possible. He was worried that he might unknowingly put all his strength into his hands.

I soon realized that he was no longer the same Kim Hyun-Sung that I knew.

“You scummy bastard. Do you know how long I’ve been waiting for this moment?” Kim Hyun-Sung said.

“*Cough… cough…*”

“You disgusting bastard,” he cursed.

He seemed like he reached his limit when it came to insulting me, but…

Crack.

“*Kgh… Cough… Ugh…*”

The sharp pain that shot up from my arm made me stop breathing for a moment.

‘Shit… you bastard! Damn it… ’

He was smiling.

‘Bastard. Fuckin’ bastard. Y-You… really hit me. Shit, shit, shit.’

I knew this had to be done, but I still felt sad.

‘Hey, everyone. This bastard really hit me. Shit.’

My legs were numb, and my arms felt weak. Perhaps it was because of the pain, but I couldn’t think properly. I was still conscious, and it was probably because of my high Intelligence. Unfortunately, I wasn't sure if I could ever get used to this pain.

I even felt dejected because he had become so different from the Kim Hyun-Sung I knew.

Kim Hyun-Sung removed his hands around my neck, and I fell to the ground. I held my broken arm, and the pain radiating from it was so painful that I started breathing in ragged pants. It was *that* painful. If I had the anesthesia potion, the pain would have been better.

I was covered in sweat, and my breathing was off as well.

I couldn’t stop crying, and I would groan every time I attempted to speak.

'You crazy bastard. You jerk. You'll receive divine punishment. Shit, shit… I'm going to get revenge. I'm really going to get revenge.'

"Say something, you disgusting bastard," he cursed.

'How could you do this to me? Fuckin' bastard. How could you?'

"*Haa… haa… Ah…*"

"Does it hurt? Are you suffering? Stop making that face, all right? This is just the beginning. Things are going to get even more fun soon," he said.

'You psychopath.'

"Who knew things would turn out like this? Don't you agree?" he asked.

'Yeah, I didn't think things would turn out this way either, you jerk.'

I had no choice but to bite my lips.

'At this rate, this bastard is actually going to kill me. This is going to be a traumatic event for him.'

I had to stop this crazy runaway train somehow. I was willing to offer him my stomach, but I wasn't planning on letting him beat me to a pulp and have him throw me into a pigsty. I didn't like the fact that Seraphim was smiling beside him.

Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't in his right mind right now, and it seemed like all he was thinking about was venting out his anger on the villain who had destroyed everything he had. I had to calm him down somehow.

"M-Mr. Hyun-Sung," I stuttered.

"Don't speak my name with that filthy mouth of yours, you bastard," Kim Hyun-Sung cursed.

"I-It hurts. I-It hurts…" I muttered.

"That is nothing," he said.

‘This guy is really cold-hearted.’

“Why…”

“You know better than I do,” he answered.

‘You’re not giving me a chance to talk.’

Since I was already crying, I decided to cry even harder.

Since I was already in pain, I pretended to be in even more pain.

In situations like this, it was better to feign ignorance. It was already too late to deny the fact that I was the masked hero, so I decided to skip that and acted like I had no memories of my past life.

‘I really don’t know anything. Why are you doing this to me? Why are you acting like this all of a sudden? I don’t remember anything, and I don’t know what you're talking about right now. Why are you doing this? Jin Cheong is the masked scum. It’s him, not me.’

Oh, I decided to add one more thing.

‘Did something happen? Have you been brainwashed? I’m really worried about you, Hyun-Sung. It doesn’t matter what happens to me, but I’m really worried about you.’

The latter sounded like Light Ki-Young. If he were the same warm-hearted Kim Hyun-Sung, I was sure he would say the latter to me as well.

I was sure worrying about the regressor’s condition was the only thing Light Ki-Young would think about while he was in pain. I had to do that so that he would feel ashamed of his current behavior. Honestly, I thought he would hesitate a bit even though he had lost his mind and doubt had already filled his mind, but…

‘I know the real Kim Hyun-Sung, damn it.’

The essence of humans would never change.

One's personality could change based on their experience, but Kim Hyun-Sung was born tender-hearted. Would he really be able to swing the mace of condemnation at

Light Ki-Young when he had no memories of his past life and was even worried about him? I was sure he could do it, but I didn't think he could do what I had imagined.

Our bond had shattered, but he still had memories of us. I know he no longer felt anything toward them, but he still had those few memories. He was probably certain of his suspicion, but I was in pain without knowing the reason why.

Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't a bad guy, and I was sure Seraphim's words had just swayed him. The sinner was the Lee Ki-Young in Kim Hyun-Sung's past life, not me. *Ah,* of course, I wasn't saying that I was the masked scum, but if he really thought that the masked scum was me, he ought to at least keep us separate.

"Hyun-Sung… Mr. Hyun-Sung. Are you…"

"I told you not to speak my name with that dirty mouth of yours," Kim Hyun-Sung warned.

"*Ack! Ahhhh!*"

This bastard stabbed me again. No, I couldn't curse at him. I had to understand him. He was *really* struggling right now. The outer pigeon had to have placed some kind of spell on him that was affecting his mind.

Seraphim was the culprit. He had swayed Kim Hyun-Sung and made him doubt me, even though I was innocent.

"Just wait… a little. Just a little bit…" I mumbled.

"What?"

"I think… I can take care of this. Just a little…" I continued.

"You think I'll fall for that?" he questioned.

'Yeah.'

I couldn't erase his doubt, but I could definitely convince him that I had no recollection of my past life. This was definitely going to work.

I changed my expression and made sure that I looked like I was worried about him. I

had to show him that I was a saint who only cared about his condition while enduring extreme pain for as long as possible. I got so focused that the pain I was feeling seemed to have intensified. I forcefully swallowed my groans and screams.

“I don’t… really understand what you’re saying, but… e-everything… will work out. So please endure it just a little longer,” I told him.

“…”

I couldn’t really stretch out my hand, but I did my best to show him what I was doing. I couldn't help but wonder what I looked like right now. I was sure I looked really pitiful.

So far, I had rolled on the ground twice, and one of my legs felt strange. My arm was pretty much broken, too. Since I had rolled on the battlefield once, I was probably covered in blood. Pretty extreme, right?

“I don’t believe anything you say, you dirty bastard,” he said.

“Just… Just a little more…” I mumbled.

“You think I don’t notice you struggling to get out of this situation?” he questioned.

‘He’s pretty quick-witted.’

I decided to cry for now and make it look realistic. I decided to apologize as well.

“I-I’m sorry.”

“Don’t make me laugh. You better shut up before I cut off that tongue of yours! You know the truth. You do remember everything, don’t you? You did all this. Y-You ruined my life and tainted my soul. You took everything from me, rejected me, and you've been making me do whatever you wanted.

"Do you really think I’ll pity you if you just show me that kind of expression? Do you really think I don’t know that this is just an act?!” Kim Hyun-Sung grumbled.

‘Your talking has improved.’

“I’m sure you think that I'm an idiot. I can’t even imagine just how much you've been

ridiculing me by standing next to me and making me dance in the palm of your hand. I am not going to fall for your tricks, you dirty bastard!" Kim Hyun-Sung roared.

'Stop calling me dirty. I'm a clean person.'

"Say it! Tell me that you know everything," Kim Hyun-Sung demanded.

"Mr… Hyun-Sung?" I muttered blankly.

"Say it. Tell me that you were the masked man in my past life," Kim Hyun-Sung urged.

"Do you really need to confirm that, Kim Hyun-Sung?" Seraphim questioned.

"Shut up, Seraphim."

"…"

The foolish pigeon tried to help, but it backfired. Losers like him ought to keep their mouths shut.

"…"

"I'm giving you one last chance to confess all the evil deeds you've committed. However, you are not going to live to see another day, as I already know that you're the masked man," Kim Hyun-Sung said.

'I'm sure you do.'

"I don't care what kind of decision you'll make because it's better if insects like you cease to exist in this world. There's only one thing you should be worried about right now, and that's whether you're going to live like an animal and die a miserable death or die outright like a human being.

"So talk! Tell me the truth. Tell me that you did all of this," Kim Hyun-Sung demanded.

'You really think I won't say it?'

I could say whatever he wanted me to say even a hundred times, but the problem was how I could say it. It was probably best if I said it with as much emotion as

possible.

I had no idea what I ought to understand, but I decided to show him that I understood what he was going through right now. I had to show him that I was willing to be in pain if that was necessary to comfort him. I had to show him that if the complicated thoughts in his head would disappear once I was dead, then I was willing to offer him my stomach.

It'd be painful, but I was willing to endure it. It'd be sad and tragic, but I decided to stop crying because sadness wasn't what made Light Ki-Young cry. No, it was tears of joy. I was happy that I could sacrifice my life for my friend, who cherished my fading life.

I forced myself up, and I felt like I was going to collapse because of my injured leg, but I suppressed the pain and looked straight into the regressor's eyes.

Kim Hyun-Sung was wary of me, but he definitely realized that I was in no condition to resist him because he merely stared at me while holding his sword tightly.

The light that had sacrificed everything for the continent, his comrades, and his brothers was about to burn brightly one last time, all for the sake of the greater good.

"Yes, I… remember," I said.

I had to show him that if those words could allow me to protect the continent, then I'd say it even a hundred times over. I also had to show him that I was willing to take even the worst pain out there.

I cried once more and smiled. "I definitely remember."

Kim Hyun-Sung's veins bulged as his grip on his sword tightened.

"Y-Y-You ruined everything I had!" Kim Hyun-Sung stuttered.

"…"

"It was you! *Heuk*… You ate away at my life and soul! You used me without even telling me why, and you forced me to do things I didn't want to do! I also had to witness so many deaths, even though I didn't want to see them die. It's all your fault! Everything—everything is your fault!" Kim Hyun-Sung roared.

"…"

"You dirty bastard. You dirty scum! You dirty bastard!" Kim Hyun-Sung cursed.

Kim Hyun-Sung cried beaded tears as rage enveloped his face. He howled like a beast and thrust his sword forward. His sword made a beeline for me, and it let loose a shrill cry as if it was carrying the sorrow that had built up inside Kim Hyun-Sung.

The sword pierced my abdomen.

Then, I smiled and whispered, "I'm counting on you, Mr. Hyun-Sung."

Kim Hyun-Sung looked down at his hand with a grimace.

CHAPTER 764
TO THE END (22)

'It's over, right?'

I honestly had no idea what was going on. Many thoughts popped into my head, but the hot sensation in my abdomen was preventing me from thinking properly. It wasn't a good feeling at all. I felt like someone had poured lava onto my stomach.

I looked down slowly, and I saw that his sword had pierced my abdomen.

My clothes turned red, and I felt something wet soaking my bottoms.

'Shit… I really got stabbed.'

I started retching and soon vomited blood.

"*Ah… ugh… cough…*"

"…"

Just then, Kim Hyun-Sung's hand trembled. He let go of Durandal, and he looked down at his blood-soaked hands. I had no idea what he was thinking. The Regressor Instruction Manual was still active, but I couldn't see what he was thinking.

He wasn't being cautious because he was afraid I might read his mind. It was more like he had become a blank canvas.

'Revenge is futile. You're not in the best condition right now.'

"*Ah… ugh…*"

'This is the correct timing, right?'

My hand moved toward Durandal, which was stuck in my abdomen. I grabbed the hilt of the sword and used the Telescope at the same time. I saw that the timing

wasn’t that bad.

It was exactly like the future I had seen through Kasugano Yuno.

Cha Hee-Ra was fighting the enemies while spears were sticking out of her, and Jung Ha-Yan and the golden dragon's conditions were just as bad as Cha Hee-Ra.

I didn’t see it through Kasugano Yuno, but I seemed to have affected Dialugia because I saw her falling to the ground.

‘Ah, I forgot about our Dialugia.’

Aside from the trivial issues, that was pretty much everything I had seen through Kasugano Yuno.

Kim Hyun-Sung wasn’t looking down at me coldly, but I was sure he'd look down at me with a cold gaze soon. I wasn’t on the ground, but I was in the future that I had seen. I thought about forcing myself to stumble and collapse to the ground, but I didn’t want to make the fall look unnatural. A natural fall was the best here.

“Y-You… ate away at my life,” Kim Hyun-Sung stuttered.

“…”

“Everything… everything is your fault. Everything. I didn’t do anything wrong. I-I… didn’t do anything wrong. So I don’t need to feel… guilty,” Kim Hyun-Sung mumbled.

He wasn’t saying that to me. He was mumbling while looking at his blood-soaked hands. I got goosebumps at the fact that he didn’t feel anything while mumbling all those things, but I was sure he’d come to a realization soon.

The problem was that he hadn’t looked at me yet.

‘Isn’t she supposed to show up once I get stabbed by his sword?’

I didn’t get any reaction from Lucifer’s side.

The future I had seen wasn't complete yet, but I wanted to start seeing signs.

‘Man, what if I really die in vain?’

She'd send some kind of sign once the scene was complete, right? She'd do something once Kim Hyun-Sung showed me his cold eyes, right? I'd feel really bad for our Dialugia if I ended up dying. I didn't want to die like this, but I wouldn't feel lonely in the afterlife, as I wouldn't die alone, but I still didn't like this…

I knew that wouldn't happen, but I started getting nervous.

I was starting to lose consciousness, and it was getting hard for me to stay standing.

I wanted to collapse the moment he looked at me, but he was still looking at his hands without showing any other reaction. I finally saw him lift his head up slightly, but he seemed hesitant, and I couldn't make out his expression because my vision had become too blurry for me to see clearly. I used the Telescope and looked at his face.

'Why is he crying?'

Kim Hyun-Sung was crying while frowning.

'Are you really crying?'

"You… ruined me. You… pulled m-me… into this hellish place… when I did nothing wrong," Kim Hyun-Sung mumbled.

"…"

"You took everything from me… Everything… You killed everyone precious to me and took away everything I considered precious… This is righteous judgment. A very… righteous… T-This is…" Kim Hyun-Sung stuttered.

"…"

'Then lift your head. Isn't that the natural thing to do here? The death of your archenemy must feel good, right? At least sneer at me or something.

'Hurry up and show me that cold gaze of yours because this scene won't be complete until Lucifer sends some kind of sign toward me.

'Look at me with disgust or look down at me as if you don't feel anything for me. I think I'm going to collapse at any minute now. My legs are giving out. I'm falling right now,

and you have to look down on me. Look at me like I'm a piece of shit, okay?'

I fell backward slowly, and I saw Kim Hyun-Sung stretching his hand out toward me. It seemed like he was trying to catch me, but I had no idea why he was doing that.

"*Uh… ah… ah…*"

He was making strange noises. To make things worse, he failed to catch me.

I wasn't sure if the blood on his hand had made it slippery, but the fact that he missed me was a phenomenon that I couldn't understand, especially with his high stats.

Perhaps he was exhausted, but the situation was *really* confusing. Thanks to him, I managed to fall backward pretty dramatically, but I was losing consciousness to the point that I couldn't feel the cold ground on my back.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked worried, and it felt like he was moving instinctively.

I was running out of breath, and it was getting harder to breathe. I couldn't speak properly and could only make sounds like "gah" or "kgh." It would be nice if Lucifer were to hold a surprise party for me, but I still couldn't see any signs.

Kim Hyun-Sung stared at me in worry, and his eyes were filled with doubt instead of coldness.

'This bastard… '

'I thought our ties were broken, man. Why are you acting like this? What the hell is going on? What's wrong, man? Don't try to mend things together. Don't try to fix our bond that's been torn to pieces. Stop resisting it, and don't even try to take your words back.

Perhaps I had made a mistake by telling him that I was counting on him.

Of course, there was no guarantee that the cold gaze ending wouldn't happen because Lucifer was probably cooking up something. There was also a chance that she might appear right before my death.

Anyway, I disliked the fact that Kim Hyung-Sung was doing something outside the

script.

I was the type to destroy every single possible variable before starting something, so Kim Hyun-Sung's current behavior was nothing more and nothing less than risky. I recalled the image I saw against my will. The bond I had destroyed with my own hands.

"I-I'm a regressor."

'Yeah, you're the regressor of Altanus whom I had chosen, so don't do anything stupid. Don't ruin my plan. Just do what I ask, okay?'

"I really hope you'll accept. It's my way of apologizing, and this item will be useful to you in many ways."

'I don't need anything, so just shut up and focus on your role.'

"I used to be a fool."

'Do you know why you're really stupid? It's because of your behavior right now. Our bond has already been ripped to pieces, so why are you trying to glue the pieces back together? Can you even handle the guilt of what you did to me just now?'

"Stop! Stop it! Don't give me any more responsibilities! No more! Mr. Ki-Young! Get out of there! Get out! Stop… Heuk… Stop it. What more do you want from me… What more can I do…"

'You're the one who should stop—stop and get out of there. What more can you do? Do you know that you're changing the future right now? It's changing. I really hate unexpected turn of events.'

"I'm sorry."

'Stop doing things you feel sorry about.'

"Mr. Ki-Young?"

'Don't say my name.'

"I trust you."

'Bastard. I don't trust you anymore.'

"That's because I know you'll carry the burden with me."

'I thought you had already put it down. You don't have to carry it again. You're doing things you're going to regret later.'

He was truly trying to glue together what he had shattered; I was in no condition to talk, but if I could talk, I wouldn't be able to say anything, anyway, as the situation before me was just too absurd.

Kim Hyun-Sung was resisting the Regressor Instruction Manual. Actually, it might have been deactivated because I was dying, as when I tried to control him again, I didn't see him react.

The things I had seen earlier kept popping into my head; he was trying to glue together the memories I had overlooked. He was feeling an immense amount of guilt.

He was trying to deal with the emotions he didn't even need to deal with in the first place, and the fact that he was still trying to mend things was so absurd that I couldn't help but laugh inwardly.

"S-S-Stop," I said.

"…"

"N-No… *Cough*…"

"*Heu… Ugh… Heuk…"* Kim Hyun-Sung cried.

"Stop it… man… *Cough*…" I said.

The future was changing. I used the Telescope and looked at Kasugano Yuno. I saw that she had stood up at some point with an extremely confused and surprised expression. I was sure the unexpected change in the situation had baffled her.

The future was changing. Cha Hee-Ra was smiling as she proceeded to remove all the spears that were sticking out of her.

Jung Ha-Yan was channeling a spell while swinging a part of Han Sora.

The moment when Kim Hyun-Sung was supposed to look at me with a cold gaze had already passed. He was supposed to do it at least a minute ago.

I tried my best to control him with the Regressor Instruction Manual, but he was too determined. I could no longer control him so easily, and he wasn’t doing the things I wanted him to do.

I tried to control his emotions, but he was resisting that.

I couldn't see an opening; he was just focused on whatever he wanted to do.

However, he was doing nothing but cry.

I felt an immense amount of pain, and it wasn’t the pain I was feeling in my abdomen.

It was the pain I was feeling from guilt as Kim Hyun-Sung was gluing the pieces of our shattered bond together.

Despite the pain and sorrow, he didn't stop picking up the broken pieces.

Why? I had no idea.

He knew that he might get severely injured doing that, so why was he doing it?

Was it because of a meaningless sense of responsibility?

'Is that it? Are you doing this because you feel responsible? Is it because you feel like you need to endure the things you caused? You don’t have to. You really don’t need to do that.'

It felt like I was going back in time.

It was like I was going back in time— the demon summoner case, the Mirror Lake incident, the times we ate together, the time when we went to the Griffon Festival, the times we spent with the guild members talking about silly things, the times we trained together and went on expeditions, the incident when he gave me all the tasks available in the guild, and the time he had a debate against Park Deok-Gu about which job I had to choose.

And…

“Thank you for helping me. I’m Lee Ki-Young.”

The very first memory I had shattered was the memory of our first meeting, and Kim Hyun-Sung diligently picked up the pieces of that memory to glue them together.

Fwooooooooooosh.

“…”

Kim Hyun-Sung held his head in pain and collapsed to the ground.

Then, he started vomiting.

“*Ah… Ugh… Ahhhhhhhh… Heuk… Kgh… Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! Blech. Bleeeech… Heuk… Heuuk… Bleeeeeeech.*”

“…”

“Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young?” Kim Hyun-Sung called out.

“…”

“Mr. Ki-Young? N-no… *Heuk*… Please… Please… Please… No…!” he pleaded.

“…”

CHAPTER 765
TO THE END (23)

"Please… Please… *Blech*… *Haa… haa…* Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young?" Kim Hyun-Sung called out.

"…"

"No. No… *Heuk*… Please… Please…" he pleaded.

"…"

'I want to say no as well.'

I couldn't speak properly.

My abdomen was really hot, and I was getting colder.

I wanted to turn my head and check up on Kim Hyun-Sung, but it was just too difficult for me to do. However, I didn't need to do that because I could feel Kim Hyun-Sung approaching me. I had no idea how to describe his current condition. I had seen Kim Hyun-Sung break down many times before, but it was my first time seeing him like this.

He had never shown this side of his even when he despaired before the 27th Legion, when he broke down in his subconscious world, and even during that final battle against Rafael.

'Why did you do this, man? We're done for. It's over.'

"*Ahhh… Ack… Ahhhhh.* Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young…" he cried.

Kim Hyung-Sung probably thought he needed to pull out Durandal sticking out of my stomach, as that was the first thing that he did.

I felt my blood drain out of me, and Kim Hyun-Sung hurriedly put pressure on it to

try to stop the bleeding, but it obviously wasn't enough.

Kim Hyung-Sung definitely remembered the potion he had on his person, as he took them out and poured them over my injury, but it wasn't enough for a wound this deep.

"Please… please… please… please… *Heuk*… Pleaseeeee!" Kim Hyun-Sung pleaded.

"…"

"God, please save him. Please… I beg you. Please…" Kim Hyun-Sung continued.

"…"

"This is wrong. T-This can't be… No. How could this happen? Shit… shit… *Heuk… heuuk… Ahhhhhhhh… Ack…* Stop! Shit! Stop… Please… stop. Please… Priest… Priest! Priest! *Ahhhhhhhhh! Ahhhhhhhhh!* Please! *Heuk…* Please!" Kim Hyun-Sung shouted.

"I… I…" I mumbled.

"Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young! Please don't die. Please… please…" Kim Hyun-Sung begged.

'You stabbed me.'

"*Ahh…* Please save him. Please… I beg you. You can still live. I'm sure you'll be fine. Everything will be fine. Can you hear me? Do you hear my voice?" Kim Hyun-Sung asked.

'How can I survive this?'

I had lost a lot of blood. Even if my wound healed, I would still die unless a miracle happened. I wasn't a doctor, but it was pretty obvious to me.

To make things worse…

"Please… *Heuk… heuuuuk*…" he cried.

This bastard had to have gone crazy because he was giving me his mana.

I had an idea about what he was trying to do.

'Are you trying to turn me into an Undead? Is that even possible?'

It was possible since he possessed Lucifer's mana.

Of course, I wasn't sure how high the quality of an Undead I would become, as he was a swordsman rather than a black mage, but I wanted to know if I would still have a soul by then. After all, it'd be strange if it would just be my shell running around.

Actually, I had no idea if that was even possible. Light Ki-Young was born when Benigoa and the high-ranking gods had bestowed their holy power upon me. In other words, there was no way I would react to such a dark mana like that.

Even if I wanted to accept it, the holy power inside me would reject that mana.

As expected, my holy power resisted his mana. Kim Hyun-Sung bit his lips even more as he tried to inject his mana into me, but more blood poured out of me as my body furiously resisted his mana.

I decided to act like I was rejecting it, as it was already happening. I placed my hand on top of Kim Hyun-Sung's hand and shook my head, telling him that he couldn't do what he was trying to do. I wanted to show him that I'd rather die and be with the light than live a disgraceful life as an Undead.

'Damn, I'm fuckin' cool.'

'No, I shouldn't get carried away… Man, if there really were no other way, it wouldn't be so bad to live as an Undead, but I think that's something Sora should do, not me. Don't you agree?'

"…"

"*Ahh*… *Heuk…* Please… Please live. Please… Please… *Heuk…* I'm sorry. I-I'm sorry. Shit… shit… *Heuk…* Please… What should I do? What… *Heuk…* Please don't close your eyes. Your wound isn't that deep… You can recover from this. It can be treated. The wound is healing right now!" Kim Hyun-Sung exclaimed.

'Liar.'

“The potion… I think the potion is working. The potion… *Heuk*… you made it, so…” Kim Hyun-Sung paused.

‘Stop lying. It’s not that good of a lie.’

“Please… just hold out a little longer, and the priests will be here. Then… everything will go back to normal. I was a fool… *Bleeeergh*… *Heuk… heuk…”* Kim Hyun-Sung cried.

Kim Hyun-Sung still looked handsome even though snot and tears had marred his face, which was a pretty surprising sight.

However, I had no idea what his mental health was like right now.

I got a strong feeling that he was saying whatever was on his mind and wasn’t really thinking at the moment. I was sure he had learned emergency care, so I had no idea what he was doing. My heart was still pounding, so why was he doing CPR? He placed his face on my chest while massaging my limbs that he had shattered earlier.

“*AAAAAAHHHH! AAAAAAHHHHHH!*”

His cry sounded like a beast's desolate roar.

I couldn't help but think that he had finally realized the severity of what he had done. I waited patiently for the cliche where I would miraculously live once his tears landed on my wound, but the reality was cold.

Most of his tears were falling on my wound, but I was still dying.

“*Ahhhhhh…* Please… Goddess Benigoa… Altanus! Altanus! Altanus!… Please… give me another chance,” he begged.

‘This is kind of sad.’

'You disliked your status as the regressor. Actually, it’s more like you hated it to the point that you thought dying would be better… You didn’t like… being the regressor.'

“Please… give me another chance… Altanus. Please… Goddess Benigoa… Goddess Benigoa. If you can hear me, please… give me another chance. I-I won’t mess it up this time. I won’t be swayed. If you give me one more chance… I’ll carry all the

burden. I won't make you worry about anything.

"Please forgive me for my sins! Please! I'll do anything you tell me to do. I'll die if you tell me to die, and I'll obey your every word! I'll live my entire life as your servant, Goddess Benigoa! S-So… please… Please give me… give me another chance," Kim Hyun-Sung pleaded.

"…"

"Please… *Kgh… kgh…* Give me… another chance. Please… give me another chance. A chance… *Heuuuk*… Give me another chance… Shit… Give me another chance!" Kim Hyun-Sung shouted.

'The hot-tempered Doom Hyun-Sung is here~'

"You bastards! Please! I'm begging you, so give me another chance! Bastards! Shouldn't you take responsibility?! You made me a regressor against my will! *Heuk… Kgh…* Can you hear me? I asked you to give me another chance! Can you hear me, you fuckin' bastards!!! You made me this way… you bastards… so save him. Fuckin' assholes! Please… just this once… give me another chance… Please!" he yelled.

'He's good at cursing.'

"Lucifer! Lucifer! Can you hear me? Can you? You can take everything that I have, so please save him. If that's impossible, then turn me into your regressor. You can do that, right? Right? Just like Altanus, you can do that as well!" Kim Hyun-Sung said.

'Is he even getting an answer? Don't trust her. Why would you ask her for help when she had been manipulating you in the first place? Are you that *desperate?'*

"Please turn me into a regressor! Please…" he continued.

Unfortunately, no one answered Kim Hyun-Sung.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked more desperate than ever as he kept shouting at the skies.

He was probably thinking that he was running out of time.

'Man, he really lost it.'

'Why did you do it? Why did you make such a foolish choice? Have you ever considered the possibility that you might go crazy? When your sword touched the stomach of the innocent light, ruination was your only outcome. You shouldn't cry over spilled milk. You shouldn't have done that, you know?'

"*AAAAAHHHH! AAAAHHHH!...* Please… *Heuuuk... heuk... heuuuk...* Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young!" Kim Hyun-Sung called out.

"…"

"I'm sorry… I'm really sorry. I'm really… *Heuk...* sorry. It's my fault. It's all my fault. W-We shouldn't have met in the first place. If I had known that this was going to happen… *Heuk...* If I had known… If I had known that this was going to happen…" Kim Hyun-Sung paused.

Kim Hyun-Sung was definitely blaming himself. He was thinking that all of this happened because I met him. I saw him slowly picking up Durandal.

"It's all my fault. All of it… You… You shouldn't have existed in the first place. Kim Hyun-Sung, you fool. *Heuk...* Shit… *Heuk..."* Kim Hyun-Sung mumbled.

'You crazy bastard. Stop trying to do something stupid. Stop it.'

"Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young… Hold out just a little longer. I'm sure everything will go back to normal. *Ha... haha...* I know those bastards. I'm sure they don't want to see the destruction of the continent. They'll make me regress again," Kim Hyun-Sung reassured me.

'Hey.'

"T-This won't happen next time. I'm going to carry every single ounce of burden from the very beginning. You don't have to carry it with me, and we don't even have to meet. Actually, I won't talk to you in the next life. I-I… *Heuk... heuk...* won't stand by and let this happen," Kim Hyun-Sung stuttered.

'Kim Hyun-Sung? You haven't lost it, right? Right?'

He placed his sword on his neck.

'You're going to commit suicide? Are you crazy?'

There was no guarantee that Benigoa or that scummy Elune would allow him to regress, even if Kim Hyung-Sung ended up dying here.

In addition, turning back time had to have been extremely difficult and expensive. Of course, I had no idea how Altanus did it, but my assumption had to be correct.

The problem wasn't whether they would do it or not but whether it was even possible in the first place or not. Moreover…

'Shit, are you confident? Are you confident enough to go this far without me?'

Even if he somehow regressed once more, there was no guarantee that he'd succeed and come this far again.

I was sure Kim Hyun-Sung knew that all too well. I was sure that he also knew that regressing once again was impossible. He didn't choose to die to become a regressor; he chose to die because…

'He just can't handle this reality… '

Any justification wouldn't work here; there was a high chance that he simply couldn't live with the mistake he had made.

"*Ha… haha… ha…* In your third life, you'll be much happier than you are now. I-I'll make sure that happens. *Heuuuk… heuk…* I…" Kim Hyun-Sung paused.

Kim Hyun-Sung's crying face turned cold, and he really looked like he was going to stab himself in the neck.

It felt like time was slowing down again.

I didn't think that this was the end, but I could see that we were heading toward the worst ending. Shit, how come things turned out this way?

'Did things get ruined because of that? Lucifer, you crazy crow. Is this really the end? I met the condition. I won the bet. Do you really think it makes sense for things to end things like this just because I didn't meet one meaningless condition?'

"Next time… Next time… Again… If I get… another chance… one more time…" Kim Hyun-Sung mumbled.

There's no next time, Kim Hyun-Sung, you crazy bastard! There is no next time. Hey. Hey!

When Durandal was about to pierce Kim Hyun-Sung's neck…

'Think about it; don't you find it strange?'

My own voice echoed inside my head.

'It's strange, right? Right, Lee Ki-Young? Don't you agree?'

W-What's strange?

'It's funny that in the end, we let someone else make the decision. Don't you find it strange that you decided to bet everything on Lucifer's decision?'

That's…

'You must've really trusted her. Did you really trust that crazy crow?'

I did?

'We don't get backstabbed—we're the ones who backstab.'

What the hell are you talking about?

'This is the right *future. The scene before you is what we really wanted to see.'*

I'm not going to do something shitty like a third life.

'I never said we should do it again either. It's just… this is the right future. Do you know what you have to do?'

"…"

'You already know.'

I couldn't tell whether I was hallucinating right now or not. Actually, I was definitely hallucinating. I wasn't sure whether it was because I was dying, but… Yeah, I was seeing things because it was time for me to go.

'Kim Hyun-Sung can become perfect.'

I saw a masked man pointing at the sky with his arms around Kim Hyun-Sung's shoulder.

CHAPTER 766
TO THE END (24)

I blinked multiple times to see if the masked man would disappear, but he was still there and was pointing at the sky. I really felt like I was hallucinating because it was such an unrealistic scene. The fact that Kim Hyun-Sung hadn't looked at the masked man next to him made the scene look extremely unrealistic.

I thought perhaps it was because he was out of it, but that wasn't the case at all. There was no way he wouldn't notice someone else's hand on his shoulder, and even Seraphim didn't notice the masked man.

And what did he mean by—

"You already know the answer."

Was this bastard trying to play games with me? I couldn't think straight, so I couldn't understand what he was saying. I blinked once more, and I noticed him disappearing like smoke. I clicked my tongue, but…

'Was that… a hint?'

Perhaps it was something I needed to do? However, the ongoing situation was a complete mess. Was I supposed to grasp at straws or something? The masked hero wasn't completely wrong. I wasn't saying that I was agitated by his nonsense bullshit, but his words were pretty convincing.

It definitely wasn't like us to let others make the choice during our final moments.

I also agreed that I was the type to backstab, not get backstabbed. I wasn't dumb enough to let Lucifer make the decision because she had already backstabbed me once.

I didn't know the exact details of our contract, but we had definitely set up a trap for each other. I finally knew how Kim Hyun-Sung could become perfect and why the masked man was pointing at the sky.

I backtracked calmly and felt like the puzzle pieces were falling into place, but there was one problem.

'Can I… trust him?'

It wasn't like us to let others make the choice during our final moments, but I was suspicious about whether he was really *me.*

What if that masked man was my enemy? What if the individual who had erased my memories was him rather than me? What if he had planned something sinister, and I was nothing but a pawn under his control?

What if he was the masked scum, not the masked hero?

No…

'I have nothing more to lose.'

I was the reason behind all this. Regardless of the outcome, it wasn't that bad of a decision. I didn't know what kind of ending this was going to bring, but I only had one choice, so I had to bet on that.

Basically, I had driven him out.

I looked up at the sky and saw the strange light.

Seraphim standing awkwardly looked like he was trying to assess the current situation, but I was sure that it wouldn't take him long to make a decision.

I noticed that the hand stretched out toward Kim Hyun-Sung was moving up again.

'It's understandable.'

The external system wanted a Kim Hyun-Sung with no human emotions. However, Kim Hyun-Sung had glued back our bond, and he was even bawling for me.

The external system had decided that Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't fit to manage its program.

The situation wasn't bad for me, but… it didn't really mean anything because I

needed to make a decision soon.

'Kim Hyun-Sung can become perfect.'

'Yeah, I know what you're talking about. This is exactly that kind of situation, right? It's cliched, but the protagonist awakens to become even more powerful once his precious comrade dies. Did he call that program down just for this moment?'

There was a saying that candles would burn the brightest before they flickered out, and it didn't take long for me to realize that I was burning the brightest right now. Actually, it was possible that the masked hero had given me the power to burn the brightest.

I was thinking deeply, but I soon emerged from my thoughts.

I had to say something because Kim Hyun-Sung was still trying to slit his throat.

"St… op," I mumbled.

I knew he would stop, and he instantly stopped moving.

"Mr. Ki-Young?" Kim Hyun-Sung said.

"It…"

"Mr. Ki-Young? *Heuk*… Mr. Ki-Young. Mr. Ki-Young… Mr. Ki-Young?" Kim Hyun-Sung repeated.

"Please… stop. Don't… do… that…" I said.

"A-Are you okay? Are you… okay?" Kim Hyun-Sung asked.

Kim Hyun-Sung ran toward me and held me in his arms. I decided to tell him that I was fine, but whenever a person voluntarily said that they were fine, it would usually mean that they were *not* fine.

"Yes, I-I'm… fine," I answered.

I smiled brightly. I didn't know how my smile looked, but I probably looked *really* heroic. I could tell because he was looking at me with a distorted expression. I was

sure he was aware that I was dying right now and that I didn’t have much time to talk.

“*Heuk… heuuuk…*”

“So… please don’t cry,” I said.

I grabbed his hand as well to calm him down, but I felt his hands trembling. I knew how he was feeling without deducing his emotions, and I heard him hurriedly repeating the words he said earlier.

“I-I found another way. I-It won’t fail this time. I-I don’t know if you heard me earlier, but… I’m going to be a regressor again. It won’t go wrong this time,” he said.

“You don’t… need to…” I mumbled.

“What?” he questioned.

“I’ll…” I paused.

This stage wasn’t bad for me to exit as the saint of light. I just had to talk with a small amount of sincerity, and it wouldn't be a bad way to die.

The majority of stories out there usually had an arc like this. The supporting role who had been sacrificing from the very beginning would make a final sacrifice while carrying all the burdens.

This was the perfect moment for that.

“I’ll… leave it… in your hands,” I continued.

A line like this would make it even better.

“It’s been… fun…” I added.

It probably wouldn't happen, but if this really were the end for me, then I'd say I had fun.

“I’m glad… we were together…” I told him.

"*Heuk… heuuuk…"* he cried.

"Thanks to you…" I stopped.

'Thanks to you, I profited a ton—no, let's not say that and just let him think that this was the good way to end things.'

"I'm… sorr…"

I wanted to apologize as well since I had done many serious things up until now. It wasn't intentional, but I thought I was pretty harsh to him in many ways.

'Yeah, in many ways, but let's call it even with this. Okay?'

"I'm sorry… I couldn't keep…" I said.

'I'm sorry I couldn't keep my promise about going on a trip together, man. I planned everything I was going to do after this was over, but I'm sorry I can't do those.'

"The… Hyun-Sung… I know is… stro…" I paused.

'I already know that you're not weak. You're strong, and I'm not just talking about your physical strength. You're really strong in many ways, and that's why I chose you. I chose you because you're really strong and not an idiot who's easily controlled by others. You've proven that to me.'

"Please take care… of the others…" I requested.

'Take extra good care of Ha-Yan and Deok-Gu, okay? If I really end up dying like this, they'll start doing stupid things. Take care of the guild members as well as my children. Tell Ji-Hye noona and Hee-Ra noona what happened. I want you to visit Kasugano Yuno from time to time, too.'

"Don't… be sorry. I… *haa… haa…* under… stand," I told Kim Hyun-Sung.

'Don't feel too bad about what you did. It couldn't be helped. This is all because of Lucifer and that evil Seraphim. I know you didn't stab me intentionally.'

"I'm really… thankful… for…"

I decided to say one more thing to end this.

"…"

"*Heuk… heuuuk…"* he cried.

"…"

"The sky… I want… to see… the sky…" I mumbled.

What time was it? I really wanted to see the sky so much that I couldn't stand it.

"The sunset…" I said.

'Yeah, I want to see the sunset. I think that'll be a graceful death. If I die like this after seeing the sunset, I don't think I'll have any regrets.'

I unknowingly smiled quietly. I didn't know how Kim Hyun-Sung was going to accept the current situation, but I could see him crying. I had already gotten used to his tears because I felt like I had made him cry more than smile.

"I want to… see it… one… last time…" I said.

I was really sad because I couldn't see the scenery I wanted to see because of the strange light that covered the sky. I wanted to close my eyes while looking at the sunset.

'You know I'm not usually direct, right? You know what I want, right? You know what you need to do, right?'

Kim Hyun-Sung was no longer bawling. He bit his lips and looked up at the sky.

Perhaps he wanted to make his brother's last wish come true, as that brother of his had shared everything with him. It was possible since we were talking about Kim Hyun-Sung here.

Whatever decision he would make, I was sure he'd help me see the scenery I wanted for my graceful ending.

"Mr. Hyun-Sung… I… leave it…" I mumbled.

Kim Hyun-Sung got up slowly. I didn't know exactly why the masked hero said Kim Hyun-Sung could become perfect, but I thought I finally understood.

Kim Hyung-Sung didn't need Lucifer or Benigoa's powers.

He could stand by himself.

"*Heuk… heuuuk…"* Kim Hyun-Sung cried.

He could stand by himself.

'Get up.'

Yes. He could do it by himself.

'Get up, Kim Hyun-Sung.'

My chosen one—the regressor of Altanus—could stand himself.

'Get up, man.'

"Our promise…" I said.

"Yes, our promise…" he repeated.

"Sunset…" I said.

"Yes."

Kim Hyun-Sung got up and looked up at the sky.

He raised Durandal slowly and assumed a stance while pointing Durandal to the sky.

I wasn't sure whether it was possible, but I thought I knew what he was trying to do, which made me laugh.

And that was when Kim Hyun-Sung started changing ever so slowly, but I wasn't sure whether he was aware of it or not. Actually, I was sure that he wasn't aware of what was happening to his body.

‘Shit… He’s fuckin’ cool.’

Light seeped through his large black wings, but it wasn’t Benigoa’s light.

It was Kim Hyun-Sung's own red light—his red light suffused his wings.

His dull black wings changed and had been replaced by radiant wings that were so bright I felt like staring at the sun. It was the same for the horns on his head. I thought they were going to disappear, but his horns grew larger and were shining as well.

The red sunset shone down on him.

“*Ha… haha… hahahaha…*”

That was his power; it belonged to no one else but him.

‘No, this is our secret weapon.’

This was the power of friendship that his precious brother had bestowed upon him.

“*AAAHHH!!!*”

Kim Hyun-Sung thrust his sunset sword toward the sky.

CHAPTER 767
TO THE END (25)

I had no idea how to describe Kim Hyun-Sung right now. Enveloped by the sunset, Kim Hyung-Sung appeared holy. I admired him because he was unleashing his own light rather than the light that belonged to Lucifer or Benigoa.

'He was worthy all along.'

That was the only explanation that made sense.

Benigoa's holy power made me suffer, but Kim Hyun-Sung's body was prepared long ago. Whether he could move a step higher or not was up to Kim Hyun-Sung; it wasn't up to those corrupted beings above.

I finally understood why everyone wanted Kim Hyun-Sung.

He was basically a rookie with experience. Those who could recruit him would have a tool that would put them at a huge advantage.

'Just look at him… '

Sunset wings, sunset horns, and sunset sword.

The way he screamed while crying gave me a certain strength that made me want to clench my fist, and he gave me the confidence that he could achieve the impossible. I was sure many people were looking at the same sight as me, and they had to have realized that the hero was with us.

A massive Goddess' Mirror appeared in the sky just then. This was done so that people could sing songs about the hero who was doing the impossible, comfort the warriors who were tired of fighting, and carve the fact that there was a hero at the front lines in everyone's mind.

The battlefield became quiet. I wondered what everyone was thinking as they looked at the colossal Goddess' Mirror in the sky.

I saw Kim Hyun-Sung swinging his sword, and the sunset sword that hadn't responded to him up until now was shining brighter than ever before.

I saw people quietly lifting their heads and staring blankly at the sky. Jo Hye-Jin, who was leaving the temple while supporting Dominions with one hand, looked up as well.

I had no idea why she was helping Dominions, but she seemed to be smiling. She looked relieved and was smiling at Kim Hyun-Sung, who had finally found his true self.

It was understandable, considering everything that Kim Hyung-Sung had gone through. Kim Hyun-Sung looked different from the time when he looked like a demon and couldn’t move because countless platinum swords were sticking out of him.

- Guild Master…

The scene would have been a lot better if she hadn't said that in such a formal tone, but I figured that was the limit of our Jonobono.

I wasn’t sure why she was doing that, but she untied her blue hair tie and held it tightly in her hand. Jo Hye-Jin’s long hair instantly danced in the wind, but she didn’t seem to care. It seemed suspicious that she was holding onto her hair tie tightly.

‘Did Hyun-Sung give you that as a gift?’

- Hang in there, Master.

It seemed that way based on the atmosphere.

Otherwise, there would have been no reason for her to hold onto that tightly.

Just then, I smiled when I recalled the bet I had made with Ji-Hye noona. I turned my head and saw Lee Ji-Hye enjoying her break after getting out of Dominions’ body.

Seriously, noona…

‘The war isn’t over yet… ’

I couldn’t really blame her for taking a break after doing everything she could do, but drinking a cup of coffee while sitting by the window was a bit too much.

- Don’t scold me too much if you happen to see me, oppa. You already know that I’ve done everything I could, and if things still don't go your way, then you’re just unlucky. It’s already out of my hands, so what more can I do? It’s all up to the heavens now.

To make things worse, Ha Yeon-Soo was massaging her arms and legs.

- It’s really pretty, unni.

- I agree. Looking at that, I’m convinced that god really *does* exist. Or maybe he’s become a god.

And that was when the coffee cup she was holding fell from her hands.

Ha Yeon-Soo reached out to try and grab it, but a *clank* sound echoed as the coffee spilled all over the floor. It wasn’t a bad idea to include a cliche that foreshadowed that something bad was going to happen, but it made me nervous for some reason.

-…

- Lee Ki-Young… You’re okay, right?

'No, I think I’m in trouble. I’m starting to lose vision.'

-…

-…

- Yeon-Soo, prepare to leave.

- What? All of a sudden?

- Get ready to leave right now, damn it!

Looking at her face… I wanted to smirk, but when I looked at Kasugano Yuno, it felt like something big was going to happen, so I couldn’t say anything.

She was on the floor and was crying. I had no idea what was going on, but it seemed

that she had failed to see a happy future.

Well, I wasn't even sure if she could see something like that or not, but her face was telling me that this was how my life was going to end. Obviously, the majority of the people were cheering.

- Oh God, thank you. Thank you.

- It's the Sunset Swordsman. *Haha*. It's him!

- Hang in there a little longer. The Sunset Swordsman is fighting with us.

- We believe in you! Guild Master of the Blue Guild!

- We can do it! We can do it!

The warriors who were tired of fighting were happy that the war was coming to an end.

The denizens of the Sacred Democratic Country and Lindel, which was like my hometown, were probably looking forward to the end.

It wasn't over yet, but they believed that Kim Hyun-Sung was going to win in the end.

They were praying, cheering, and singing for the hero who was protecting the continent. They hugged each other while crying and prayed for the hero who was leading them. They prayed that he'd hang in there just a little more, just a little longer…

Park Deok-Gu was no exception.

- Pretty cool, right, Mister? Our guild master oppa is really cool.

- Don't you remember what I told you? I told you that we would win. I told you many times that our bro would go *boom, boom, bap!* and destroy everyone. That's how he became like this.

- Do you really think he'll end…

- Hey, Ki-Mo bro. I'm sure he can do it. I guarantee it. If hyung-nim and the bro are

together… I'm sure they can do it.

I couldn't help but laugh. I wasn't sure how long they'd been traveling together like that, but it was a nice sight, especially when thinking about what Park Deok-Gu had gone through in his first life. I was happy seeing how much he had grown. Hwang Jung-Yeon approached him and held his hand, and the two of them looked at the sky.

Park Deok-Gu mumbled again.

- I'm sure they can do it.

- Yes, I'm sure they can.

Their bright smiles put me at ease, and that might be the reason why I liked that pig so much. He was always helping me get rid of useless worries.

He'd live a life different from his first life. He'd live a *Park Deok-Gu* kind of life.

He'd be the life of the party, and he was going to have a ton of fun. He might end up marrying Hwang Jung-Yeon, too. It was kind of awkward to imagine him having a family, but the thought of it alone was so amusing.

I couldn't help but laugh just imagining Park Deok-Gu's children running around in the guild.

Now that I thought about it, I was going to get married as well.

Our Ha-Yan…

'If I end up dying… '

Ha-Yan… Ha-Yan…

Jung Ha-Yan was on the ground and was hugging a part of Han Sora. She looked up at the sky while panting, seemingly relieved. The fierce battle had come to an end, and it seemed that she could finally take a break.

'…'

I was kind of worried about what would happen to her after, but I was sure she'd do

fine since she had Han Sora. Actually, I wasn't sure why I kept thinking about dying. I was going to live until I was senile. I thought I got too invested in this role, but still…

- Oppa?

She was quick-witted.

- O-Oppa?

I thought our gazes met just now. Sometimes, she was so quick-witted that it was scary.

- Oppa… O-O-Oppa.

Jung Ha-Yan got up and fell forward. The soldiers and mages nearby grabbed her.

'Yeah, I think it's best if she doesn't come here. I'm kind of glad that she doesn't have an ounce of mana left.'

Jung Ha-Yan grabbed her head while screaming.

Jung Ha-Yan screamed while holding onto Han Sora as tightly as possible amidst the cheers. It looked like she couldn't see me. I wasn't sure how she found out, though.

Perhaps she had something like a Lee Ki-Young Instruction Manual or something?

Please say no…

'If I were to die… Miss Hee-Young. Yeah, make sure to listen to her because she's one of the few people in the guild that I can trust. Look at her praying calmly even now.'

Our first meeting wasn't that great, but if there were a chance… it would be nice if we became even closer. I could also see Elena and Elias. I noticed the siblings talking quietly among the other races.

- You don't have any regrets?

- You can see it right now. The Blue Guild is where I need to be…

- Yes, I see that. *Haha*. I thought I'd seen many miracles, but… this sight is really…

- It’s a beautiful sight.

I was glad that she had no regrets about coming to the Blue Guild.

Meanwhile, Hee-Ra noona seemed to be thinking about fighting Sunset Hyun-Sung.

'Please don’t. It’s great that you’re following your instincts, but if you rely on it a little too much, you’ll make the people around you suffer.'

Still, I was glad that the Red Mercenary Guild was here. I couldn’t believe that guild was actually like an iron cage that had been keeping her locked up.

- You did well, my queen.

- What about the fight?

- It looks like it’s going to end soon.

- *Hm…*

- Ma’am?

- Who do you think would win if I fought him?

'Please don’t fight him.'

- Actually, don’t answer that. I’ll just enjoy it for now. I’m not sure if this will *really* be the end, but… I’m glad we have a chance to climb even higher. Seeing that, I think I finally understand why my darling has decided to stick with him.

Perhaps it was because they were a guild that respected power, but they all applauded and stared at Kim Hyun-Sung with admiration.

- Hang in there, Guild Master. Let’s cheer him on, everyone.

- Hang in there! You got this!

- *Hahahahaha!* It’s finally over. Shit, it’s finally the end!

It wasn’t actually over because the fight was still ongoing.

When the column of sunset light struck the sky, everyone cheered.

BOOM!

The strange light manifested something. The external system had to have realized it would be defeated at this rate, so it invested an enormous amount of holy power to transform into a giant that filled the sky.

The giant used its two hands to try to block the sunset light.

For some reason, its side looked like a weak spot to me.

I recalled the moment when Park Deok-Gu shouted Longinus' Lance as he thrust a god's side while we were fishing, but I shook my head because I knew Kim Hyun-Sung could do it.

"*AAAHHHH! Heuk… AAAHHH!*" Kim Hyun-Sung roared.

'It's hard, right? Just hold on a little longer. So many people are cheering for you.'

My Mind's Eye allowed me to see many people cheering, singing songs for him, and praying for him. Our guild members believed in him as well. Well, I decided to just exclude Jung Ha-Yan, as I had to filter out what she was doing.

Our rookies—Actually, I couldn't really call them rookies anymore, but Ah-Young and Chang-Ryeol… and Alps—our newest member. They were all cheering for Kim Hyun-Sung.

'The Guild Master of the Black Swan, who likes you, is cheering for you as well.

'This might really be our last, but… No, I really think this is going to be our last time. This might actually be my final activation of the Regressor Instruction Manual, so just accept it. I have seen so many people believing in you and cheering for you.'

I sent Kim Hyun-Sung the things I had seen through the Regresor Instruction Manual, and I was sure he felt them as well. I was sure he had felt and seen the things I had felt and seen. I was sure he could see what the denizens of the continent looked like right now.

He was definitely aware of how many people were cheering and praying for him.

Kim Hyun-Sung bit his lips and held back his tears.

'Hang in there, our Regressor.'

Just then, another pair of wings appeared from his back.

'Yeah, you can do it, Regressor of Altanus.'

The Sunset Sword split the strange light into two, achieving the impossible.

"*AAAHHH! Heuuuk… AAAHHH!*"

Kim Hyun-Sung's light annihilated the strange light, and I saw the sunset pouring in.

"*Ha… ha… haa…"* Kim Hyun-Sung panted.

I couldn't help but laugh because I had to be really into roleplaying.

I had no idea what was going to happen afterward, but it was really funny that this was how I was going to die.

Between saving the continent and me, I wanted Kim Hyun-Sung to choose the latter.

The fact that I had to sacrifice myself in the end was ridiculous. It was… really shocking. I had no idea why I had chosen to do this, either. I watched with doubt, but… I really… really… I really had to be out of my mind. I had to be really into my role.

"Mr. Ki-Young?" Kim Hyun-Sung called out.

"…"

Still, the scenery wasn't so bad.

"…"

"…"

"…"

“Mr. Ki-Young?” Kim Hyung-Sung repeated.

“…”

I closed my eyes.

CHAPTER 768
THE LAST (1)

- If someone were to ask me about that fateful day, then I would tell them that I saw the most beautiful scenery and light on that day.

"…"

- After many years, if someone were to ask what the scenery was like on that fateful day, everyone would say that the scenery was beautiful and that the sky was covered with a holy light. That's right, the continent had emerged victorious. We had driven out the demons that threatened the continent, and we got what we deserved. It was a victory that we deserved.

"…"

- However, we gathered here today not to celebrate that victory but to commemorate the saint who had sacrificed everything he had for that victory.

"I[1] still can't believe it."

"…"

"It's really… unbelievable."

- Yes, to commemorate the sacrifice of the saint…

"…"

- That's right. Father Lee Ki-Young, the Sub Guild Master of the Blue Guild, has always been willing to sacrifice himself. H-He really sacrificed a lot of things. As someone who was one of the closest people to him… I… as his friend… I know… h-how heavy… the burdens he was carrying… and if I were to… talk about it… all day, it wouldn't… I'm sorry. Again… it's… about my friend… Lee Ki-Young… *Heuk…* I'm sorry.

I looked up and saw Miss Jo Hye-Jin having a hard time with her speech.

She couldn’t take her eyes off the eulogy in her hands, and I couldn’t quite describe how she looked right now. She was trying her best to talk, but she couldn’t talk properly, which showed us how much she was struggling.

Miss Jo Hye-Jin had never really broken down in front of so many people, and the crowd that had gathered was shocked, as they had never expected her to cry at an official gathering like this.

‘It’s cruel.’

Making her stand there was a cruel thing to do.

I couldn't even quite imagine how hard it had to be for her to talk about the sub guild master’s life. Miss Jo Hye-Jin's eyes were bloodshot. Before we could celebrate the continent’s victory, the devastating news of Father Lee Ki-Young's passing arrived, and she had to step foot in this hellish place without even getting proper rest.

Miss Jo Hye-Jin still had a hard time talking, but she was forcing herself to talk again.

However, she collapsed soon afterward. She forced her voice to come out, but what we heard was a cacophony of screaming and crying.

- *Heuk… heuuuk… heuk…* I’m sor… *Heuk…*

- I’d like to apologize to everyone here. We’ll change… the order in a bit…

An official from the Order of Benigoa spoke, and a few priests came up to the stage to take care of Miss Jo Hye-Jin, who was suffering from a mental breakdown.

Everyone looked confused about what to do next, but I was sure they’d continue with the memorial service. After all, the memorial service was extremely important.

Father Lee Ki-Young was the hero of the continent, and a saint who had worked hard for the continent. That was probably the reason Miss Jo Hye-Jin was here, despite the fact that this was a difficult time for her.

Someone had to stand there and endure the anguish to tell everyone just how noble and selfless he had always been, as well as the kind of life he had been living.

Miss Jo Hye-Jin was right; the continent had emerged victorious.

It seemed like the war was never going to end, but it ended. Of course, it was the most brutal and difficult battle we had ever experienced.

The strange light was dispersed, and the world was dyed in the color of sunset. Then, the most beautiful scenery I had ever seen appeared before us. Everyone sang songs of victory, but no one was aware of the fact that there had been an even bigger sacrifice behind that victory.

People laughed and sang songs in the face of the brand-new skies. If I hadn't seen the corpse of the sub guild master, whose eyes were closed with a smile, I would've celebrated with the others.

I could still remember that day as if it had happened yesterday.

Under the brilliant sunset, Miss Jung Ha-Yan was bawling while holding onto his corpse, and the guild master was staring blankly at the sky.

The guild members were at a loss for words, and Mr. Park Deok-Gu was in denial. That day, which was so chaotic that it couldn't be described with words, was filled with sadness rather than happiness. Nothing really changed, though.

I saw Miss Jung Ha-Yan's shoulders trembling violently while sobbing. If it hadn't been for Miss Han Sora holding her hand tightly, she wouldn't have come here in the first place. Actually, it probably didn't matter because Miss Jung Ha-Yan was still in denial.

I heard her talking to Miss Han Sora from time to time. The conversations were mostly about the sub guild master talking to her and the days they spent together. Miss Han Sora, who had been released from the demonic seal, responded to her words while smiling faintly, but…

'Those things probably didn't happen.'

I never thought Miss Jung Ha-Yan would deny the sub guild master's death. She seemed the most unstable out of everyone in the guild, and she even prayed that her life would end quickly so that she could be with him.

To be honest, no one thought that she would be here.

There were many empty seats.

Miss Elena and the guild master weren't here. Actually, it was more like they couldn’t come here, as the sub guild master's death had changed many things. It hadn't even been three days, but the news had stupefied everyone on the continent.

Everyone used different ways to cope, but the son of the light's death affected the Blue Guild the most.

Of course, other people had been affected as well.

Miss Lee Ji-Hye of the Black Swan Guild vanished after hearing the news. Miss Sun Hee-Young and Miss Kasugano Yuno disappeared around the same time as well.

I heard Miss Lee Ji-Hye and Miss Sun Hee-Young were contacting each other, but no one knew where they were headed or if they even disappeared by themselves.

Miss Cha Hee-Ra, the Guild Master of the Red Mercenary Guild, wasn’t here as well, even though we had received a message that she would attend…

“Miss Alps?”

“…”

“Miss Alps?”

“…”

“Miss Alps.”

“*Ah*, I’m sorry, Miss Kim Mi-Young,” I apologized.

“It’s fine. I should… be the one who should apologize,” Miss Kim Mi-Young said.

“…”

“If it’s not too much trouble, may I ask you for a favor?” Miss Kim Mi-Young asked.

“Of course,” I answered.

“I think Miss Jo Hye-Jin will be returning soon. She’ll probably take a short break, wait here, and then head up the podium…” Miss Kim Mi-Young said.

"*Ah*, okay. Will you be heading out right now?" I asked.

"Yes. I think… I should talk to the order again," Miss Kim Mi-Young replied.

"It's hard… in many ways," I commented.

"It can't be helped because of what happened… and we have a lot of things to take care of. Anyway, I really didn't expect that I'd end up talking about work during a memorial service…" Miss Kim Mi-Young said.

"Is the guild not taking care of those things?" I asked.

"I don't want the others to worry about these things, and I think it's best to take care of things quietly, especially when you think about Miss Jung Ha-Yan's condition… I think it's best to keep things quiet," Miss Kim Mi-Young explained.

"I see."

"I'll leave it to you. The memorial service will probably resume soon. Miss Jo Hye-Jin said that she wanted to be the one to end the service… Please take care of her… until she calms down," Miss Kim Mi-Young requested.

"Okay."

Miss Kim Mi-Young got up quietly and seeing her puffy eyes made me sad. Of course she was sad—she was one of the people closest to the sub guild master. However, I was sure she wanted to deny reality more than anyone else.

'I'm sure she didn't want to… discuss that here.'

There was a simple issue about the ownership of the sub guild master's body. The Order of Benigoa wanted to store the body of Benigoa's son for symbolic purposes.

It was honestly a strange idea to me, but…

'Well, they said it's for symbolic purposes.'

The Order of Benigoa seemed unwilling to give up his body.

The sub guild master died after leaving the Blue Guild officially, so the Blue Guild

technically couldn't claim ownership of his body.

In addition, Father Lee Ki-Young had decided to keep his position in the church, so the Order of Benigoa claimed that they owned his body.

Meanwhile, the Continental Protection Management Committee, which was still around, claimed that they'd take his body away.

The Blue Guild had ownership of his body during the memorial service, but I was sure those groups would start fighting over it once the memorial service was over. I didn't want to imagine it, and I didn't think it was supposed to happen in the first place.

Regardless, I studied the manual in case some people ended up fighting, including myself. We were having a hard time dealing with the sadness, but we had to face this headache-inducing political problem.

I was sure Miss Kim Mi-Young didn't want to do this either. Miss Kim Mi-Young probably wanted time to herself, but her surroundings wouldn't leave her alone. She had to deal with the aftermath of the war, the rumors surrounding the sub guild master's death, and she had to protect the Blue Guild as well.

I was sure she thought those were important because she knew how much Father Lee Ki-Young loved the guild. Doing whatever she could was probably the best way she could mourn for him.

'This is sad… I'm sure… this isn't what the sub guild master wants to see… '

I was sure that this wasn't what he wanted.

I got up and started walking. I eventually saw Miss Yoo Ah-Young and Mr. Lee Chang-Ryeol nodding at me. Miss Kim Ye-Ri grabbed Miss Kim Mi-Young, who was heading toward the officials of the Order.

The two started talking to each other. I had no idea what they were discussing, but I was sure it was related to the conversation I had with Miss Kim Mi-Young earlier.

"Who do they think they are? How can they ask for his body? I'm sure they're behind it. They're. Up to something. Those bastards," Miss Kim Ye-Ri cursed.

“Miss Kim Ye-Ri, I don’t think this is the time… let’s talk… later…” Miss Kim Mi-Young suggested.

“I want to go with you,” Miss Kim Ye-Ri said.

Miss Jung Ha-Yan had to have heard her because she raised her head. After talking to Miss Han Sora briefly, she lowered her head again, but an unknown chill suddenly went down my spine. I wasn’t sure why my hands and feet were shaking, but I thought it wouldn’t be strange at all if an accident occurred.

Miss Han Sora took a deep breath. I saw Miss Hwang Jung-Yeon and Mr. Ahn Ki-Mo getting up to talk to Miss Kim Mi-Young. Then, I saw Miss Jo Hye-Jin sitting quietly and crying by herself. I approached her quietly and sat next to her, but I didn’t know what to say to comfort her. I was sure doing what I could do was the best thing to do, so I decided to hold her hand.

“…”

“…”

“I’m sure I looked ugly,” Miss Jo Hye-Jin said.

“…”

“I was… really ugly,” Miss Jo Hye-Jin repeated.

“I’m sure everyone understands,” I told her.

“I shouldn’t have been so stubborn… I think… I caused trouble until the very end. I’m sure the sub guild master… is ridiculing me right now. He’s probably laughing at me and asking me if this is the best I can do,” Miss Jo Hye-Jin said.

“…”

“I couldn’t read it,” Miss Jo Hye-Jin said.

“…”

“I couldn’t tell people that we should honor and overcome his sacrifice and that this was what the saint of the continent wanted. I couldn’t tell them how much he loved

the continent and the kind of life he lived," Miss Jo Hye-Jin continued.

"…"

"If I had just read… what was in front of me… it would've been over… but I couldn't do it. *Heuk…* I couldn't do that one thing properly. Even in the end… there was nothing I could do… *Heuk…"* Miss Jo Hye-Jin cried.

Miss Jo Hye-Jin lowered her head and cried again.

I looked down and saw blood on her thighs. I felt like the crimson blood that had stained her black bottoms gave me a glimpse of her feelings. This was the same as last time, so I couldn't help but bite my lips. I wondered whether mentioning this again was the right thing to do, but I had to say it.

"Miss Jo Hye-Jin, are you…" I paused.

"…"

"Are you…"

"Thank you for worrying about me, but this will be the last time. I had to do it, or… I won't be able to put an end to this," Miss Jo Hye-Jin said.

"But, still…"

"Thank you. Thanks to you… I have the strength to go on. Please return to your seat so that I can put an end to this. I think I can do it now," Miss Jo Hye-Jin said.

Miss Jo Hye-Jin went up the podium and continued her speech. She paused a few times and forcefully held back her tears, but she didn't stop talking.

- H-His sacrifice was a meaningful sacrifice.

There was no such thing as a meaningful sacrifice.

- I'm sure he'll say that we can overcome it. He'll tell us that… we'll overcome this and that this was nothing. My friend, who loved us more than anyone, smiled while closing his eyes during his last moment… and I'm sure he'll watch over us while smiling.

There wasn't an option to get over someone's death or stand back up after overcoming such immense pain. Death was always painful, and it was a curse that would eat away at people for eternity.

- Let's… overcome the pain and rise up. Let's remember the fact that he was with us…

"…"

- The saint of the light, son of Benigoa, and my friend… he will become the light shining down on the continent, and he will be with us. He'll forever remain… in our hearts.

---

1. Alps' POV ☜

CHAPTER 769
THE LAST (2)

I[1] opened my eyes and saw the same old scenery.

“Guild Master?”

I heard someone calling me, but I immediately started walking away.

- The saint of the light, son of Benigoa, and my friend… he will become the light shining down on the continent, and he will be with us. He’ll forever remain… in our hearts.

I heard a voice through the Goddess’ Mirror, but then it disappeared.

The guild house filled with a cacophony of noises instantly went silent. I couldn't hear anything, and the silence made the guild house appear even more desolate.

I walked up to the door and started knocking.

‘Come in.’

I saw a quiet room. I sat quietly in a chair and looked around before shaking my head.

‘What’s wrong?’

I stood up after staying in the room for a while, but I still didn’t hear anyone’s voice.

I grazed my fingers across the books on the desk.

These were the books he often read. I would always see him sitting here, either taking care of his tasks or reading books.

During his free time, he would bring over his alchemist kit and perform experiments I couldn’t understand. Of course, he even spent his time sitting here quietly.

I remember him eating here sometimes whenever he got too busy.

Traces of him were all over this place, and he enjoyed spending his time here.

I looked around the room for a while, but I still didn't hear anyone's voice.

'Ah, I was... actually about to eat. Just in time.'

I walked and eventually saw a table. Thinking about what kind of food one could easily make, I put my hand inside the food storage.

'It's nice.'

One could probably make a simple fish dish with these ingredients.

I could still remember one of his favorite fish dishes.

'Wine would be nice as well.'

I couldn't hear any voices, but I nodded.

After placing two plates on the table, I ate the food that I cooked myself.

I couldn't really taste it, and it wasn't as tasty as the dishes I had cooked for us two.

I took a sip of wine and started walking again.

I didn't know where I was headed, but I decided to walk for now.

Well, looking around the guild wouldn't be a bad idea either.

I opened the door and stepped out. The training ground appeared before me.

He had never really been the type to come here often, but whenever he was here, he'd usually sit on the terrace and watch the guild members train while drinking coffee.

Now that I thought about it, he had never really been a fan of physically intensive activities. I wanted him to train, but he was easily exhausted. Perhaps because he was born with a weak body?

I could still remember him smiling at me while catching his breath.

He'd smile, telling me that the activity wasn't for him and that it was too exhausting.

I could still remember this one time when he swung a wooden sword while smiling bitterly. He immediately lost interest in wielding a sword. Now that I thought about it, we often held our parties here.

We eventually created a guild house, which was where the "official" banquet hall was located, but the guild members often came here once they were done training. They'd sit down here, drink beer, and talk to each other.

It felt like *that* kind of mood would always appear naturally, as the guild members had always been a raucous bunch. However, it seemed that I was mistaken.

I was sure he would order the guild staff while looking down at the members, who were busy training in the training grounds.

They would carry simple tables and chairs into the training grounds. Once everything was prepared, he'd come down quietly and talk to them.

'You did well today as well, Deok-Gu. You too, Mr. Hyun-Sung.'

"I…"

Time would pass quickly whenever we had fun and laughed with each other. There were times when I felt kind of sad because time had passed too quickly, but every single time we had fun had been pretty interesting experiences for me. I would always be worried that my schedule the next day would get affected, but those times were a lot of fun.

The guild members wouldn't show up to the training grounds every day, but he would always drink coffee and observe those who were training. Whenever our eyes met, I would raise my hand, and he'd greet me with a silent nod.

Sometimes, Miss Ha-Yan would be with him, and I would have no idea what they were talking about, but I would often see him laughing with her.

Visitors with personal connections to him would sometimes spend time with him on that terrace. In fact, I could still remember the senators of the Democratic Country,

Senator Castlerock, Senator Caitlyn, and visitors from the Order coming out to the terrace with him.

The terrace would always be noisy whenever those visitors were present.

Once they heard such noises, the guild members would either train quietly or go to the indoor training ground, afraid of disturbing his tea party.

However, I recall spending most of our time here and even though they hadn't said anything to each other, they probably thought the same.

The soft music playing in the background, the peals of laughter, the whispers on the terrace, the chirping of birds, and the occasional loud noises—all these made us feel serene for some reason.

I couldn't quite describe it, but it was probably because those noises reminded me that I had just welcomed another day and that our daily life had always been like that.

He had invited me to his tea parties. Actually, he would invite me every time, but I never bothered attending because I thought I would only get in the way. I was worried that I would make a mistake or make things complicated for him, but now that I thought about it, it would have been great if I had attended. I should have accepted his invitation.

'I told you it would be good for you. You should've connected with all these people, Mr. Hyun-Sung.'

"…"

'I heard it'll be Lady Marilyn's birthday in a few weeks. I'm sure she'll… '

"Yes."

I nodded quietly and started walking again.

I heard someone calling me, but I didn't stop walking.

I sat down quietly in the meeting room and stood up once more.

I climbed up on the desk and laid down on it. Yes, it was strange, but it didn't matter.

I turned my head to the side and saw an empty space once again.

'Today's meeting… '

I couldn't hear anyone, but I nodded.

'The expedition is getting closer. Miss Kim Mi-Young will go over the plan again… '

I could remember him smiling whenever Miss Kim Mi-Young was talking to everyone about her plans. Actually, he enjoyed seeing other people talk. He would even smile whenever we digressed during a serious meeting because of someone else's joke.

There were times when he seemed uncomfortable, but he was smiling most of the time.

'Is there something you would like to say, Mr. Hyun-Sung?'

"No, I'm… I'm fine," I answered.

'Then let's end the meeting here. Would you like to have a cup of coffee?'

I walked again. I wasn't sure where I was at the moment, but I decided to continue walking for now. The library, the warehouse, the griffon farm, the workshop, and the banquet hall.

I looked up while walking slowly and saw that the sky had turned red at some point.

I couldn't hear any noises, but I continued walking.

When I got to the roof of the guild house, I saw Lindel. The scenery was so nice that I couldn't believe that Lindel was once a battlefield.

The scenery of Lindel hadn't really changed. From afar, I could still see the Red Mercenary and the Black Swan's Guild House, Lindel's square, where adventurers frequented. I could still see the large fountain as well, along with the auction house.

The restaurants and cafes he frequented were still there.

The noisy square was really quiet today.

I looked up at the sky and saw that its red hue had gotten deeper.

The day was coming to an end.

'It's a beautiful sight.'

"Yes, it's a beautiful… sight," I repeated.

'I'm glad I could keep my promise.'

"Promise…" I said.

'About seeing this together someday… '

"Seeing this together…" I said.

The scenery looked especially beautiful today, and I smiled at the sight.

I turned and saw him nodding at me, but when I blinked, there wasn't anyone next to me.

I looked up at the sky again and glanced to the side, but I only saw a sword.

"Together again," I said.

I raised the sword slowly and looked up.

The sky covered in red illuminated the world.

He was probably the one illuminating the world. Actually, I was sure it was him.

I felt a cool breeze on my neck. I put my strength into my arms and drew the sword, but nothing was happening. Before I could go all out and thrust the sword into my neck, I realized that I couldn't move at all.

[Mythic-rank Attribute: Regressor Instruction Manual has been activated.]

"…"

[Mythic-rank Attribute: Regressor Instruction Manual has been activated.]

"*Heuk… heuuk…* Please…" I cried.

[Mythic-rank Attribute: Regressor Instruction Manual has been activated.]

"Please… don't do this. Please…" I begged.

[Mythic-rank Attribute: Regressor Instruction Manual has been activated.]

"Please help me escape from this curse. Please… please…" I begged.

I saw a pair of gold eyes on the surface of the sword. The eyes that had already changed colors wouldn't go back to their original colors.

"Please… I beg of you. Please… let me go. Please… let me end it now. Mr. Ki-Young. Please… please… allow me to atone…" I begged.

[Mythic-rank Attribute: Regressor Instruction Manual has been activated.]

I felt someone holding me in place, and I tried to thrust my sword once again, but I was utterly exhausted. Regardless of my will, I let go of the sword. The light from the golden eyes shone on the surface of the sword.

I couldn't feel anything. I couldn't feel any emotions or bonds. Most importantly, I couldn't feel that he was still alive. I couldn't feel a thing, but this damned spell was still here, holding me back at all costs.

"Please… please… *Heuuuk… heuk…"* I cried.

I couldn't hear any voices.

'Please live.'

"Please… please… *Heuk…* It's enough… now. I'm tired. *Heuk…* Please… again…" I mumbled.

I couldn't hear any voices.

'Please live.'

“Please…”

‘Please live.’

The sky was setting, and a black curtain covered the red sky.

I wiped my face with my hand and stood up again. I grabbed the sword as if nothing had happened. I returned the sword to its sheathe on my waist, and I started walking once again.

“Tomorrow… we’ll definitely be together,” I said.

‘Please live.’

“No matter what…”

‘Please live.’

“Together…”

I walked and eventually found myself on my bed.

I closed my eyes slowly and—

[Please live.]

—I heard a voice.

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1. Kim Hyun-Sung’s POV ☜

CHAPTER 770
THE LAST (3)

I was sure of it.

[Please live.]

I definitely heard a voice.

“…”

[Don’t torment yourself any longer. Don’t take on this painful burden. Put down your burden and live the life you want. You deserve to live a happy life.]

“…”

I was sure I heard a voice.

[You're someone who deserves to live a happier life than anyone else. Stop hating yourself; stop blaming yourself. I’m sure no one resents you. Your accomplishment of saving the myriad beings of this land as well as the future generations has been carved in everyone's hearts and souls; you will be remembered for a long time. God's creatures will bless you until the day the continent disappears.]

I sat up slowly and saw a faint light illuminating the dark room. The tiny and faint light flickered as if someone was turning a lamp on and off. I couldn't help but suspect that perhaps I was hearing things, but I definitely wasn’t making up the voice I was hearing right now. The voice felt like it was echoing in my heart, not in my head.

“Alta… nus?” I questioned.

[It was a long battle. It must’ve been a struggle.]

“Wait, Benigoa?” I said.

[It was a difficult day. You lost a lot, and you also had to get involved, even though you didn't want to fight at all. It was a day where you had to endure pain and trials and grow. You withstood those difficult times wonderfully and saved countless people in the end. I praise you for your will to fight, your sacrifice, your courage, and your radiant sunset. I truly admire you for overcoming all of your struggles.]

"Altanus… Benigoa… No, it doesn't matter who you are… If you're watching, turn me into a regressor… I beg you. Benigoa," I begged.

The faint light vanquished the darkness.

"Please… I beg you. Benigoa. Please…" I said.

[The threat of the continent has disappeared completely. There's no reason for you to experience pain or make new sacrifices, and there is no reason for you to start another hell-like life.]

"The place I'm in right now. This place… it's like hell. Just give me one more chance, please. If that's impossible… kill me… Please… Kill me as painfully as possible so that I can feel terrible pain…" I requested.

The faint light vanquished the darkness.

[I cannot fulfill your wish. I understand that this is a hard time for you, but I'm sure you'll be able to overcome this great sadness and stand up again. You'll be able to get back up and live a happy life.]

"Don't make me laugh…"

[You deserve it.]

"You know I don't deserve it…" I mumbled.

The faint light vanquished the darkness.

[No, you deserve it.]

"You know what I've done as well… You know I've done some pretty bad things," I said.

[It’s not your fault. I’m sure no one will resent you.]

“Don’t make me laugh. Don’t…”

[*He*… won’t resent you either.]

“Shut up! Y-You know nothing!” I shouted.

[I guarantee that he won’t resent you. He wants you to be happy. He wants you to lay everything down, break away from your past and sins, and live a new life. He’s looking forward to the life you’re going to live and what you'll experience.]

“Don’t make me laugh! Shit! You bastards! Bastards! Bastards! Do you really think you have the right to say something like that? You guys are just a bunch of bitches! You scummy bastards! You have no right to talk about him. You bastards… *Heuk*…” I cried.

I got up quickly, and the faint light vanquished the darkness once more.

I turned slowly to the side.

[I’m sincerely looking forward to the happy life you’re going to live from now on. I’m looking forward to the stories you, your friends, and your families will create.]

One of my eyes in the mirror was flickering…

[Your story hasn’t ended yet.]

My eye flickered once again.

[Lift up your head and look around the continent you protected. Experience the continent that will go through a lot of changes. Go on vacation, not expeditions, and look at the new scenery with your friends, not comrades. Enjoy your new life and show it to me.]

My eye flickered as the voice entered my ears.

“*Heuk… heuuuk… heuk…”* I cried.

[Enjoy and experience many things. Complete your story.]

It didn't stop flickering.

"*Heuk… heuuuk… heuk… Kgh…*"

[There are still many things you haven't done and haven't experienced yet. You saved everyone. They exist because of you. You deserve to live a happy life more than anyone.]

"*Heuk… heuk…*" I continued crying.

[Move forward. Forget what happened and start a new…]

"I can't do that. I can't, Mr. Ki-Young," I said.

[…]

"I can… never do that. I can't imagine a new continent, vacation, new scenery, or a new life. I can't… *Heuk…* I can't think about anything. I will never forget it. I don't deserve to enjoy any of those things," I told him.

[Kick down the door for a fresh start.]

I kicked down the door and left.

I heard a loud noise, but I just started walking away.

"It's definitely impossible by myself. If it hadn't been for you, this outcome would have been impossible. You're the one who deserves to enjoy happiness. You had sacrificed a lot more than me. You truly cared about this continent, and you truly wanted to protect everything," I explained.

The light in my eye flickered.

[Don't be afraid anymore. Please don't hurt yourself anymore.]

"I believe you haven't finished your story yet, Mr. Ki-Young. I want to see what kind of life you'll live and the stories you'll create. Imagine witnessing new scenery and fooling around with Mr. Deok-Gu like you usually do. Imagine going on a trip with the guild members as well. *Ha… haha*. It's in the distant future, but if you do end up marrying Miss Ha-Yan… just thinking about how you two will end up and what your

children will look like… b-brings me… joy.

"Those are the stories you'll create from now on. They're things you deserve to experience. It's a life you must enjoy, not me," I explained.

[…]

"Actually, I'd like to enjoy it with you, if possible. I-I know I don't deserve it, but… if you'd let me be… a bit greedy, I'd like to enjoy all of these things with you," I said.

I didn't stop walking, and the scenery around me changed little by little. I saw the night sky filled with stars, and the buildings swept past me along with the people on the streets.

I walked a bit faster and spread my wings. The distinct light of sunset poured out of me. I flew to the sky in an instant, and the entirety of Lindel appeared before me. The scenery of the continent up north looked beautiful despite the destruction.

I saw small lights. Countless small lights lit up the continent, making it look as if it were covered in stars. It was an insanely beautiful view of the night sky.

"Are you seeing this?" I asked.

[…]

It was the same scenery I had seen yesterday. The scenery up north was as beautiful as always, and it didn't even look like there had been a war up there not too long ago.

Tiny lights decorated the beautiful sceneries of the Mirror Lake, Rift Museum, Laios, and the Republic.

"They're places you managed to protect, Mr. Ki-Young," I said.

I flew across the sky, and I felt the cool wind blowing against my face.

[They're things *you* protected.]

"They're praying for you, Mr. Ki-Young," I said.

[They're all for you. Everything is for you.]

I left Lindel, and the light in my eye continued to flicker.

I landed quietly and saw people looking at me.

“The Sunset…”

“It’s the Sunset Swordsman!”

I walked inside and saw familiar faces.

“Guild Master?”

“Why are you…”

“Guild Master of the Blue Guild.”

Many people were gathered inside. I walked down quietly, and they opened up a path for me.

“Oppa? These bastards… just now… these bastards…”

I even saw Ye-Ri, and it had been a long time since I saw her.

“Guild Master, why are you…”

I also saw Miss Kim Mi-Young, and she looked nervous. I patted her shoulder while nodding, and I saw her moving to the side quietly.

The holy knights blocked my path, and their nervous faces told me that something had happened before I arrived here, but…

“Guild Master of the Blue Guild, what brings you here? If you had told us earlier…”

“…”

“We’re currently taking care of Father Lee Ki-Young. You may be the sunset hero, but the Order will not allow this rude behavior.”

“…”

“Please, for Father Lee Ki-Young…!”

“I heard his voice,” I said.

“What? That’s…”

“I heard his voice, so I’ll be taking him away,” I told them.

“…”

“I’ll take him away,” I repeated.

“…”

“…”

I saw Father Basel looking at me quietly.

“Go ahead, Sunset Swordsman,” Father Basel said.

“But Father Basel, Father Lee Ki-Young is… our Order's…”

“I-I told him that he could take him away, did I not?! You stupid fool!” Father Basel roared.

“What? But… that’s…”

“I’m sure our Father Lee Ki-Young… will be happier with you,” Father Basel said.

“I really appreciate it, Father Basel,” I said.

“Don’t worry about it, Sunset Swordsman. Please take good care of him,” Father Basel said.

I looked down quietly and saw him in his coffin. The way he was smiling in his white clothes made him look like he was really happy. He looked like he was satisfied with all of this.

I picked him up and started walking again.

“Guild Master…” Jo Hye-Jin mumbled.

“I’m sorry I’m late, Miss Hye-Jin,” I said.

“It’s fine. I’m glad you’re here. *Heuk…”* she cried.

“The others…”

“Miss Ha-Yan and Miss Sora headed back first. I’m sure they’re nearby and are waiting for the result,” she replied.

“Please contact them now,” I ordered.

“Okay.”

“Please gather all the guild members, including Mr. Deok-Gu. Actually, gather everyone who once got into contact with Mr. Ki-Young,” I added.

“Okay.”

“…”

“Guild Master,” she said.

“Yes?”

“If you don’t mind me asking… what you said just now…” she paused.

“I definitely heard a voice. It was definitely Mr. Ki-Young,” I told her.

“…”

“Mr. Ki-Young spoke to me,” I added.

“…”

“I don’t know how, but… perhaps… we can bring him back,” I said.

“That’s…”

“I’m sure… Mr. Ki-Young is waiting as well,” I said.

* * *

“I really don’t want to say this in this kind of situation. There's also the solemn mood to consider. The scene was really touching as well, but it melts in your tongue, right? Dialugia?” I[1] asked.

“You crazy bastard!” Dialugia cursed.

“…”

“You nauseating bastard!” Dialugia cursed once more.

“That’s a pretty harsh thing to say to the hero who had saved the continent…” I said.

"Fuckin' piece of shit! A scummy bastard like you will definitely die under a curse!” Dialugia roared.

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1. Lee Ki-Young’s POV ☜

CHAPTER 771
THE LAST (4)

"But still, you shouldn't…"

"Bastard," Dialugia interrupted me.

"…"

"…"

As always, Dialugia's eyes contained a hodgepodge of emotions and hatred that I couldn't quite describe. "…"

"…"

Although it was a bit unfair, I decided to stop teasing her. She was tied up in this place, so I understood her hatred… Right now, what was important wasn't me but below.

'It was awesome though… It was such a killer scene.'

Look at our lovely regressor flying toward the temple with my holy body.

'It's enough to turn nonbelievers into believers.'

It was such a holy scene that I couldn't quite describe it. Bright lights poured out and created a path for him. Just like how Moses had split the sea, people moved to the side as Kim Hyun-Sung walked down in the middle.

My holy body was limp as if it were trying to show everyone that it was without life.

However, Kim Hyun-Sung carried me properly this time.

'I knew I would look good in that uniform.'

I was wearing the uniform that only the Pope of the Order could wear, which meant that Father Basel had taken great care of me. I was kind of worried because the uniform worn by cardinals didn't look as holy, but it looked like I was worried for no reason.

It was the funeral for the hero of the continent, after all. It was the funeral of the saint who had thrown everything away and lived for the weak, so of course, they weren't going to hold an ordinary funeral.

I could tell how much effort they had put into my memorial service.

I wasn't sure if the design pattern on Benigoa's forehead looked good on me, but after taking a closer look, it looked fancier than my uniform.

It gave off a solemn and divine mood, like the mood Benigoa's clothes gave off, and I could see the similarities in the details. It was an outfit only the son of Benigoa could wear. Who would dare be suspicious of Light Ki-Young after seeing him wearing that?

Despite that, I felt like something was missing, but with Kim Hyun-Sung's appearance, I felt like the scene was finally complete. His appearance had allowed everything to reach its peak.

'How much did I earn? How much was it?'

The holy power I had earned thanks to the scene just now was more than the holy power I had saved up so far.

Dying was nice…

This wasn't the best example, but it was similar to when the price of an art piece would skyrocket after the artist's death. For me, things would only go up from here. A peace that had been achieved through the death of a saint…

I had met all the conditions to become an idol.

- The son of Benigoa…

- The Sunset Swordsman has taken away Benigoa's son…

I had no idea why, but the holy power, which was supposed to be as for Kim Hyun-

Sung, was flowing toward me. I wasn't sure whether it was the effect of the Regressor Instruction Manual, but I felt holy power moving toward me as if they were being deposited to me automatically.

'I don't think it's the effect of the Regressor Instruction Manual.'

It felt like a multi-stage deposit… but who cared?

The important part was that they belonged to me.

"How can you smile… in a situation like this?" Dialugia asked.

"It's because of the overall situation. Of course, I'm nervous. I'm worried about the people down below, and I don't even know how we got here.

"Based on the situation, I think we're in heaven, but it's kind of different from what I had imagined… I don't know what's going to happen from now on, so I should accumulate as much holy power as possible. It's like insurance, Dialugia," I answered.

"…"

"As you can see, we're in an empty space, so I should at least live off of holy power. What would you like to eat this time?" I asked.

"…"

'…"

"Can we even go back?" Dialugia asked.

"We have to go back, and I'm sure we can go back," I responded.

I had many things to handle. I was also worried about the others, including our Ha-Yan, the pig, and the lovely Kim Hyun-Sung's mental health.

However, I had never imagined that Ji-Hye noona, Sun Hee-Young, and Kasugano would re-establish the brigade.

I had successfully sent a message to Kim Hyun-Sung, so I was sure Lee Ji-Hye would hear the news. The situation had changed, so she'd probably join immediately and

help him find a way to take me back.

Now that I thought about it, I was really glad that I didn't ask him to save me. Sending him a message that hinted at the existence of hope was better than whining and doing something dirty, like asking him to revive me because I wanted to live again.

As a result, we managed to establish an indescribably strong connection.

And this was great if he truly wanted to bring me back…

"C-Can we really be brought back to life? Can I really see Dialuria again?" Dialugia asked.

"I already explained the situation to our Dialuria, so don't worry. By the way, dragons are really fascinating. I'm able to send messages to Hyun-Sung because of my attributes, but…" I paused.

"If it weren't for the strange energy that suddenly appeared, I wouldn't have been able to notify the others of the situation either," Dialugia said.

"You're now Dialugia, the holy dragon. You're the dragon of light that fought with the son of god. It has a nice ring to it, right?" I told Dialugia.

"…"

"Anyway, I feel relieved now that we've taken care of the things we were worried about the most. There will be some hope for us once they find a way," I said.

"I still don't know where…" Dialugia trailed off.

"…"

"I honestly don't know where we are," Dialugia continued.

"…"

"It's not an ordinary space. However, it feels like someone had prepared this for us," I told her.

“Someone did?” she asked.

“Yes. Someone prepared this space for us. Under normal circumstances, people would either completely disappear after death or go toward where Benigoa is at the moment.

"However, we're obviously not at where Benigoa is,” I said.

“Who would—-”

“Who knows?”

Perhaps it was Lee Ki-Young before his memories were erased? Or was it me in my past life? Regardless, this space was prepared for us.

“Then… why are those lights…” Dialuia pointed.

I turned and saw a silver orb of light, a blue orb of light, and a brown orb of light floating in mid-air—Thronus, Cherubim, and Dominions.

“I’m not sure, but I have an idea,” I replied.

“What do you mean?” Dialugia asked.

“I must be about to become a god,” I answered.

“You lunatic,” Dialugia commented.

“I mean, it does sound pretty crazy, so think what you want. Do you still remember what I told you about myself before I lost my memories?” I asked.

“…”

“I was fantasizing about what it would be like if I were the one who prepared this space for us,” I continued.

“…”

“Let’s assume I already knew that I was going to die. Actually, I already knew that I was going to die, so it’s not an assumption. I probably thought I needed to prepare

something, and I needed a place that I could stay temporarily before I completely disappeared," I explained.

"Are you saying that… *this* is that place?" she asked.

"Assuming that we can observe everything that's happening down below and this is like a control tower where I can guide our Hyun-Sung, then, yes. I have a feeling I'm right… I might be wrong, but… it's not completely impossible," I answered.

I smacked the silver orb of light that was trying to approach me.

"So, why…"

"I'm not sure. This is probably what Lee Ki-Young thought before losing his memories," I said.

"What?"

"That he was tired of it," I responded.

"…"

"Before losing his memories, Lee Ki-Young was most likely a control freak, unlike my current self. I'm sure he was the type who couldn't stand it if he couldn't control everything," I added.

"You're still a control freak, though," Dialugia pointed out.

"…"

"…"

"Anyway, that's probably why he was tired of it. He didn't like the fact that someone else was managing the continent. Wouldn't you be annoyed if things were happening to you without your knowledge? I'm saying Lee Ki-Young was probably like that before losing his memories, so don't misunderstand. That's why… he probably wanted to change it.

"He wanted to manage the continent himself. He must have also believed that he'd feel more at ease if he did it himself. He must've prepared them… because he knew it

would be difficult for him to do it alone," I explained.

"But they're…"

"The main system has changed, so their thoughts and actions will change as well. Their unique habits and personalities might not change, but I'm sure they can be fixed through a great method. I'm sure he can make it so that they can't remember the things that happened in the past. The important part is that they do all the bothersome tasks. They were actually born to take care of the continent, so they're more efficient at it.

"Regardless, creating an existence at an executive level will require an enormous amount of holy power. However, if that executive-level existence's job is to take care of the core and nothing else, it won't be *that* expensive.

"It's like when someone goes bankrupt and buys repossessed items for super cheap prices," I explained.

"Will it… really be okay?" she asked.

"Why wouldn't it be okay? The main system was moved, so what kind of problems could occur? You even participated in my small experiment. I had already created a body for someone, and nothing bad happened.

"Of course, I made many plans… in case a problem does arise," I answered.

I turned to the platinum-haired guy biting his lips nervously while sitting next to Dialugia.

"Did you know that these guys wanted to be like humans? Did you know that they felt an unusual lack of affection from their creator?" I questioned.

"…"

"The angels envied and admired the humans. That's why I'm planning on raising them like humans. I'll create young bodies and be considerate to them so that they can grow up like humans. The roles they'll be given may be different though, but Cherubim, Thronus, and Dominions will grow up like humans.

"They'll forget the past and probably live a happy life. I'm thinking about giving them

the things their creator didn't give them. Unlike their previous creator, which shaped them as strange monsters, I intend to give them infinite love. They'll be reborn as true angels," I told Dialugia.

I glanced at the platinum-haired guy before continuing, "I swear to you right now that I'm going to love these angels—who are going to be my hands and feet—with all my might. I'm going to give them a ton of love. I'm going to love these angels until they get tired of it."

"It's… a bad habit. You're—"

"Except for one," I interrupted.

"*Pft… Hahahahahaha!* Except for one! Except for one… I'm going to love everyone equally. Shit… I'm not going to save him. He's going to die even before he's reborn. He'll never get out of this place. *Pft… hahaha…!*" I laughed.

"…"

"*Pft! Hahaha…* Did you hear that, Seraphim? I'll never let you be reborn. I've already made a body for you, but I'm not going to recreate you. I'm not going to take you with me, and I'm not going to love you as well!" I exclaimed.

"I'm… sorry," Seraphim mumbled.

"What did you say?" I asked.

"I-I'm… sorry," Seraphim stuttered.

"What? I can't hear you," I said.

"I'm… sorry. *Heuk…* I-It was all my fault! Please give me another chance. Please…" he begged.

Seraphim kneeled before me.

I looked down at him and spat coldly, "No, you bastard."

CHAPTER 772
THE LAST (5)

'So satisfying.'

Seraphim looked like he had fallen into despair. I never imagined I'd get back at him like this, but it felt pretty good.

'Who knew things would turn out this way?'

He was shaking like a puppy out in the rain.

I had encountered many villains in my life, but I had never seen one looking so depressed. He looked different compared to Jin Cheong, who made brave and honorable choices, and Ito Sota, who raged and showed madness until the end, along with other villains I could no longer remember.

Seraphim had changed so much, but it was understandable.

I was sure there were many reasons, but the fact that I was *currently* his creator was probably the biggest factor.

Obviously, I didn't influence his mind, but he was at least aware of the fact that I had created him, and he knew that I could give him what he wanted—live life like a human being and receive love from his creator or parents.

I had an idea as to why they were obsessed with such things.

Setting aside the details of their birth for now, Yul-Ha and I had gone through the same experience as them.

However, it was a bit of a surprise to see Seraphim, who had formally denied his weakness, changing his tune in the blink of an eye.

After showing him a sneak peek of the life he had been dreaming about, he surrendered completely. From the moment I adopted him, he had never rebelled

against me, but surrendering both physically and mentally was a big deal.

I placed my cup down, and Seraphim got up in a hurry to fill my cup.

Meanwhile, a blue orb of light quietly circled around Seraphim.

'What's wrong with him?'

"What are you doing over there, Cherubim?" I asked.

"…"

"You're pretty forgiving. You still want to take his side even after he backstabbed you? Do you want to get left behind as well?" I questioned.

"…"

"My eyes are filled with tears at the brotherly love of the century that I have never seen before… How much you care about Seraphim is none of my business, but if you don't cooperate, your other brothers will end up in a heartbreaking situation. They're going to be in a *really* bad situation," I told him.

"…"

"I'm going to make Thronus and Dominions take responsibility together. Your wrong choice will influence their happiness and future. You better keep that in mind," I warned him.

"…"

"Forgiveness is not an option, Cherubim. I'm not that generous. You know what he did, right? There's no room for negotiation," I said.

"…"

The blue orb of light flickered, and I could feel it talking to Seraphim. Seraphim lowered his head and got down to his knees.

"It was foolish behavior, F-F-Father," Seraphim said.

Cherubim had to have told him to call me "Father."

“Please… if you could give me one more chance, I’ll put everything on the line, and I'll live a grateful life serving you for my entire lifetime. I’ll devote myself to this continent… *Heuk…* and carve my sins into my heart,” Seraphim muttered.

“I’m not your father, Seraphim. Also, I never gave you permission to speak…” I said.

“…”

“What are you doing, Cherubim?” I asked.

“…”

“Thronus and Dominions will be sad. They’ll have to forfeit this new chance because of a certain someone. It’ll be a huge loss for me as well,” I continued after pushing away the silver orb of light.

I knew Cherubim couldn't abandon Thronus and Dominions orbiting me. In the end, Cherubim floating around Seraphim joined the others. Seraphim was still crying, and I wanted to keep seeing him cry.

I glanced to the side and saw Dialugia looking at me quietly. She looked like she had a lot to say, but she wasn't saying anything.

However, Dialugia couldn't hold it back in the end and said, “I know it’s not really my place to say anything, but… if you’re acting this way solely based on your emotions and not because you have a good reason to do so, then you're going to look bad.”

“…”

“I’m very nervous and shocked right now as well, but I’ve never seen you corner someone so much. It feels like you’re harassing them unfairly,” she added.

“That’s what I’m doing. I’m taking my anger out on them, but…” I paused.

“…”

I had nothing to say because she was right. Rather than saying that I was taking out my anger on Seraphim, it would be more appropriate to say that I was angry about

the current situation because there was nothing I could do about it.

I didn’t think Dialugia would notice how I was feeling, but it seemed that I had expressed my feelings enough for her to notice it

I looked at Seraphim, and he avoided eye contact with me.

It was ridiculous that he was playing the victim when he was the villain who had pierced Kim Hyun-Sung with a bunch of swords. I wanted to kick him away, but like Dialugia said, it wouldn’t really do much.

This wouldn't be enough, but I had to love the creatures of my future for my own peace of mind. I wasn't going to show off to Seraphim or anything just to vent my anger at him. I simply wanted to give love to my children, who would manage the continent with me in the future.

I waved at the silver light that I had swatted away, and it approached me in a hurry.

“Come here, Thronus. Our Thronus. Looks like I’ve been too harsh. Come here, our lovely Cherubim,” I said, calling them over.

“Dirty human…” Dialugia commented.

‘Don’t say it out loud like that.’

“What are you doing there, Dominions? Our Dominions and Cherubim are so pretty. The way you guys are shining reminds me of the stars. Why are you guys so pretty? Come here,” I said.

“You’re a really dirty human…” Dialugia repeated.

“You can come closer, Thronus. That’s right, come here,” I said.

“Do you even know how disgraceful you look right now?” Dialugia questioned.

“That’s right, Cherubim. I was being really harsh earlier. You come here, too. You can play together. Don’t worry about others… There’s no reason for you to be scared,” I told them in the sweetest voice possible.

“Really…”

Seraphim was definitely going to get jealous to see us so happy.

I cringed a bit when I rubbed my cheek against the formless light and patted it, but so what? I was sure Seraphim saw us as a family running around happily in a park.

Seraphim was probably in despair because he wanted to be happy as well.

The blue orb of light was still worried about Seraphim, but I could tell that he was happy.

'Yeah, we did have a pretty bad relationship, but it's time for a fresh start. You honestly like it as well, right? You cursed at me and called me a parasite, but now, you're sparkling like this. You're sparkling, even though this parasite is waving at you.'

The slow-witted silver orb of light flew all over the place as if he were in his element and orbited me. The brown orb of light didn't show much reaction, but it was following along. I didn't know what these orbs of light were saying, but I wanted them to be happy for the one and only poor spectator.

I glanced at Seraphim and saw him trembling while crying.

The fact that all he could do was cry made him feel even sadder.

Dialugia was right. My actions weren't really helpful, but I felt a shiver of satisfaction going down my spine, and it was both refreshing and wonderful.

I was bothered by how Dialugia was still looking at me as if I was a scummy piece of shit, but…

'At least my behavior isn't exactly disgraceful.'

I was just showing Seraphim how happy we were as a family.

"You're the hero that saved the continent. How about acting a little more mature? You should stop fooling around and think about how we're going to get out of this situation first, don't you think so?" Dialugia asked.

"Yes, well…"

"So… what's the next step?" she asked.

"…"

"Let's say that you do become a god and I understand you wanting to use them as the managers. You created these strange lights, after all. However, have you found any hints for us to go back? If you really did erase your own memories and put yourself in the current situation… wouldn't you have thought of a way to go back?" Dialugia asked.

"Do you even believe what I said?" I questioned.

"The entire situation is saying that you're right. I don't really believe it either, but… I don't think it's an unreasonable assumption," Dialugia answered.

"I honestly don't remember anything," I confessed.

"…"

"I wish I had a hint as well, but as of right now, I don't remember anything. I attempted many things because I thought a specific action or thought would trigger something, but I really can't remember anything," I added.

"Does that mean we need to find a way down there?" Dialugia asked.

I nodded and looked down. I saw that everyone had left the temple and had gathered at the Guild House.

- That was definitely Mr. Ki-Young. He's probably watching us right now.

- H-He's right. I-I'm sure I heard Oppa's voice as well.

The guild members were having a serious conversation. I had been trying to send a message to Ha-Yan, but my attempts had been unsuccessful. Based on what she said, however, some of my messages seemed to have gone through.

- Does that mean we can bring back the sub guild master?

- W-We can save hyung-nim? Is that true?

'Jeez, Deok-Gu. You lost so much weight.'

- There’s nothing I can say for sure, but… one thing I’m sure of is that Mr. Ki-Young is somewhere, and he’s waiting for us to help him. I think it’s best if we look around and see what we can do first. I think that's what Mr. Ki-Young wants us to do.

'Yeah, that's right.''

“Does that mean the humans down there need to find a way to bring us back?” Dialugia asked.

“I’m honestly not sure. I’m sure there’s a way, but… *Ah!* Before I lost my memories, did I tell you anything about my bet with Lucifer?” I asked.

“You did,” Dialugia replied.

“It might be because of that,” I said.

“What?”

“I think we should consider the possibility that I might’ve done something intentionally so that I won't get my memories back. I either don’t need to get them back, or it'll be more advantageous if I don’t get them back. I don’t know what kind of bet I made with her, but…” I paused.

“What do you…”

“If coming back to life were the only issue, then there would be nothing to worry about. However, if the control freak Lee Ki-Young really wanted to manage the continent, then don't you think he'd need to do it out of Lucifer’s sight?

"Managing the continent means becoming independent… I’m sure he wanted to completely escape from Lucifer, the other demons, and the other gods' grasp,” I continued.

“Does that mean… we need to shut out Benigoa and the existing gods of the continent?” she asked.

“I’m not sure if *shutting them out* is the right thing to do. *Hm*… I’m honestly nervous as well. My thoughts so far have been nothing but assumptions, so I’m not really certain about anything. I don’t really know what’s going on, but I think it’s best if we do whatever we can for now.

"Let’s not think about the big picture and just deal with what’s in front of us in the meantime…” I suggested.

“…”

Like what Kim Hyun-Sung had said…

“I think it’s best if we look around and see what we can do first. Actually, let’s do it right away.”

I used my holy power, and a spacetime rift opened.

I saw a familiar face beyond the spacetime rift.

“*Huh? Huh?*”

The familiar face looked at me while pointing her finger at me in disbelief. She looked like she had lost a ton of weight. I had no idea if gods needed sleep, but she looked like she hadn't been sleeping properly.

I also saw a pile of documents in her hand. I was sure she was busy care of her tasks and paperwork. After all, the ones down below weren't the only ones who would get busy after a huge incident.

“L-Lee Ki-Young?”

I didn’t know how much time I had left, so I had to get straight to the point.

“Goddess Benigoa, whom I respect and love～” I greeted.

“Where… Where am I?” Benigoa asked.

“How much are you getting paid at your current job?” I asked, smiling brightly.

CHAPTER 773
THE LAST (6)

"*Huh? Huh?*"

"Please have a seat, Benigoa," I offered.

"Where… am I? No… more importantly… *Huh? Uh? Uh…* is it really you, Lee Ki-Young? Really?" she asked.

"Yes," I answered.

"*Uh…* L-Lee Ki-Young… *Kgh… kgh…* Lee Ki-Young…" she said.

'What's wrong with her?'

"Lee Ki-Young… *Kgh*…"

'What the heck?'

Benigoa spread her arms and ran up to me.

I wasn't sure if she was trying to hug me, but I was kind of surprised by what she was doing. I knew she would be taken aback, but I didn't expect that she'd react so dramatically. If I were asked whether I liked that kind of reaction or not, I'd say the former, but I didn't think she reacted that way because she really missed me.

"So this is where you were, Lee Ki-Young! *Kgh…* I-I believed in you. Everyone said you no longer existed, and Elune even said that the continent—no, the dimension had kicked you out because it couldn't handle you, but I knew you were still here. *Kgh…*"

Benigoa was crying, and I couldn't see her face because she hugged me tight like a cicada hugging a tree. She was even hiccuping as she cried. Clearly, Benigoa was an affectionate and sentimental individual.

"Lee Ki-Young… *Kgh…*"

'Please stop.'

I wanted to get straight to the point, but I couldn't do it.

"Benigoa?" I said.

"I'm really happy to see you again like this. *Kgh…* I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do. I'm really, really sorry I couldn't help," she cried.

'You don't have to feel that bad.'

I couldn't get used to how she was acting. I thought she was going to stop hugging me now, but she simply leaned back slightly and turned to Seraphim. Then, she stared alternatingly between me and the orbs of light.

"You! How dare you! You're doing this again?!" Benigoa yelled, swatting away the blue and silver orbs of light. The way she swatted the orbs of light away with her tiny hand was an indescribable sight. Benigoa looked like she was trying to kill a mosquito or a fly.

"How dare you come here! Get away from him this instant! I'll make sure you don't lay a finger on him! Come behind me, Lee Ki-Young! I-I'll protect you!" she instructed.

'What's wrong with her? Is she sick?'

"You guys locked him up here! A-Assholes! You dirty creatures! You dirty monsters!" Benigoa shouted.

'They'll get hurt if you call them dirty creatures in front of their faces like that…"Dirty monster" is pretty harsh, too… '

"You think I'll stand by and just watch you bully him?!" Benigoa continued.

'There's seriously something wrong with her… '

Benigoa held a shield with a fancy design in one hand, and a holy spear appeared in her other hand.

'What the? That's—I've never seen that shield before.'

Benigoa's shield. I had seen it before in a book inside the temple. It was probably because she never really used it often, but the shield looked so great that it caught my attention. I honestly never thought she was capable of fighting, but she looked cool.

'She doesn't look like a fighter... '

Benigoa looked fine, but her stance looked awkward.

Come to think of it, her fight with Belial was all an act.

I thought about leaving her alone a bit longer, but she gathered enough holy power to summon a god at the tip of her spear that I had to stop her immediately. I was afraid she'd destroy this space because such immense holy power was definitely difficult to control. I couldn't let her destroy this.

"You got it all wrong. It's not like that, Benigoa. Please calm down and have a seat. They're no longer the enemy. *Ah*, aside from—Anyway, I'm sure you have many questions, so I think it's best if we talk things out… First of all…" I trailed off.

"…"

I thought it would be best if I asked how she was doing lately because I'd look heartless if I were to go straight to the point.

"How have you been?" I asked.

"*Kgh… kgh…*"

"Have you been doing well? I asked.

"Lee… Ki-Young…" Benigoa mumbled.

Ah, shit. We were back to square one. I smiled and patted her back. She cried for quite a while, and she only replied to me once she was no longer crying as hard as when she first started crying.

"It's been really hard. It's been really, really hard for me lately! The higher-ups keep complaining. I have so many things to handle, even though I don't have enough holy power."

"They haven't been providing me with any support; they just keep telling me what to do! I can't remember the last time I've had a proper rest… *Kgh*… They keep asking me where you are, and I'm just… really sad…" she complained.

"It must've been hard for you…" I commented.

"It has really been hard. We're in a state of emergency. We're also having trouble closing the rift that the Outer God had opened, and… those who lent me their holy power suddenly visited me.

"Everyone is really inconsiderate. They know we're in a difficult situation, but they came anyway and told me to pay them back. They just need to wait a little longer…

"They just need to wait a few hundred years! Is it really that hard to wait? They even threatened to sue me! They know how difficult things will get for us if they create conflict in the middle of a state of emergency!" she continued.

"Seriously," I said.

"Meanwhile, Elune is saying she's preparing to change jobs. It's been so lonely and hard… I miss you so much, Lee Ki-Young…" she added.

'Maybe this will work out better than I thought.'

"Well, it's a thing of the past… Now that you're here, everything will soon be over. S-Since you're already here, do you mind taking a look at this? This is our current budget. We don't have any other resources… Honestly, we might have to reduce the budget even further.

"Many things have been postponed as well. I thought we would be able to take care of it with the holy power we had borrowed, but… we didn't get as much as I thought… A-A lot of it was probably spent on the God of Sunset," Benigoa explained.

'Actually, it was used on me. Our Hyun-Sung has already become the God of Sunset?'

"*Ah!* N-Now that I think about it, you probably got a lot as well. Hold on… aren't you thirsty? Are you feeling uncomfortable perhaps? I'm… kind of embarrassed to ask this as your senior, but could you make an investment?

"As you already know, the continent isn't exactly in a bad situation right now. With a

bit more time, there will be no more difficulties, and it'll be the start of a happy life. If you help just a little bit, I can double, no, triple the amount you've invested!" Benigoa persuaded.

I definitely wouldn't let her borrow holy power.

"I would like to make an investment just for you, but I don't really see this as a worthy investment," I told her.

"D-Don't be like that, Lee Ki-Young. Of course, it's a worthy investment! I have you, so it'll work out," Benigoa said.

"I trust you as well, Benigoa. If you were the only one managing the continent, I'd invest in you, of course. However, that's not the case. The higher-ups are taking a huge cut, and you also have taxes to pay.

"Even if the continent ends up in a better situation, we're just going to fill up the bellies of the higher-ups…" I said.

"…"

"Isn't it pretty obvious when you think about how much you have devoted yourself to the continent? You haven't gotten proper rest and have been toiling away endlessly with nothing in return.

"The continent is still poor, and you're poor as well. You can't even do a proper report. The budget you showed me can't even be considered a budget… It's gotten to the point where the more you work, the more you'll lose. Honestly, I don't even know if I'll get interest back even if I invest… Nothing is certain," I explained.

"You're not wrong, but…"

"No matter how you look at it, it's a ridiculous structure," I interrupted.

I thought I would be able to win Benigoa over, but I had a feeling that it would be easier than I thought. Everyone had definitely thought about starting their own company at least once in their entire life, especially if they weren't satisfied with their current job.

Benigoa wasn't a new employee and was experienced enough to take care of a

continent, so I was sure she had seen many things while working. I was also sure that she knew the current state of the system better than me.

Benigoa was probably questioning whether she was supposed to even work within the system. Benigoa wasn't stupid, so she was starting to realize what I was trying to say to her.

Benigoa looked around. We were completely cut off from the outside world. The Four Angels—I meant the Three Angels, who were obviously going to be used as managers, started at me quietly.

Benigoa's eyes narrowed into slits, and she revealed a brand-new expression to me as she said, "That's impossible, Lee Ki-Young. I understand how you're feeling, but it's not as simple as you think."

"I don't think it'll be a simple task either," I said.

"…"

"I want you because I know that it's going to be a difficult task. The continent is at its turning point. Look at our Hyun-Sung, who split the strange light into two and carved open a brand-new sunset. Isn't that how new gods are normally born?" I questioned.

Benigoa looked slightly nervous.

I had an idea as to what she was imagining. She was worried that the Order of Benigoa was going to decline. I said it, hoping that was what she'd think, so I was happy that things were going according to plan, but I felt strange upon seeing her serious expression.

Benigoa's reaction was normal. After all, even though the Order of Benigoa was fine right now, there was no guarantee that it'd still be around hundreds of years later.

Once a new god took over the continent, the existing gods of that continent might gradually fade from people's memories. To make things worse, I could make that time come a bit faster if I put my mind to it.

"That's…"

“However, I don’t want to take such a sad path. I want to make it happen for the new continent, but I don’t want to work on a continent without you,” I told her.

“L-Lee Ki-Young…” Benigoa stuttered.

“I don’t think I can do it without you,” I added.

“Lee Ki-Young…” Benigoa mumbled.

‘What the hell? What’s wrong with you?’

“I-I actually… thought you were a scum, Lee Ki-Young,” Benigoa confessed.

“…”

“I thought you were a tainted soul with no room for improvement… *Kgh*…” Benigoa continued.

“…”

“I never knew you thought this deeply about me,” she said.

“Then…”

“Still…”

Benigoa avoided eye contact with me. I considered discussing the details of pay, profit sharing, or something realistic, but she seemed uneasy talking about those things.

‘Is this not going to work?’

If I were in Benigoa’s position, I would have a hard time deciding as well. After all, she had always worked within the system, and there was a high chance that she was going to keep working within it.

She seemed pretty proud of her career, and I was sure she thought I was asking her to change her values, not change her job.

Of course, the Benigoa I knew would be interested if she would get holy power, but…

“60 to 40. I’ll be 60, and you’ll be 40,” I offered.

Benigoa seemed really interested in my offer…

“The holy power you’ll receive over the next hundred years will be approximately… this much,” I said, showing her some digits.

Benigoa’s eyes quivered upon seeing the digits that changed incessantly, but…

“All of the additional conditions are written in the document I sent you,” I informed her.

Benigoa's hands were shaking, and she gulped as she read the document. However, I didn't think this would be enough. It wasn’t like me to do this, but I decided to talk with more sincerity.

“*We’re* setting up a subsidiary company. It's going to be the both of us, not just me,” I added.

“…”

“I sincerely want you to join me,” I said.

I needed to say whatever I could say before the negotiations started.

‘This is going to be a long fight… ’

This was going to be harder than I thought, so I had to be ready.

I looked at Dialugia and said, “Let’s take a break for now—”

“I-I’ll do it!” Benigoa shouted.

‘Huh?’

“I’m going to do it! I’ll do it! I’m going to do it no matter what, Lee Ki-Young!” Benigoa yelled.

‘?’

CHAPTER 774
THE LAST (7)

'I mean, I'm thankful that you decided to join me, but… '

"I'm going to do it no matter what. I can sign the contract now, right?" Benigoa asked.

'Why do I feel uneasy?'

"Do I sign here, Lee Ki-Young?" she asked.

'Why is she so eager?'

It was my first time feeling uneasy about someone telling me that they'd join my cause.

'Is she in debt or something?'

Well, I knew she was in debt, so I was more worried about the size of her debt. The company could take care of Benigoa's debt—no, we had to take care of it. However, if the debt was too huge, I'd end up losing a ton of money. I had no intention of going bankrupt so soon, even if we were going to get a lot of holy power in the future…

"Wait…" I said.

"Do I just sign here?" Benigoa asked.

"Can I take a quick look at your finances?" I requested.

"Of course, Lee Ki-Young. M-My record isn't the cleanest, but… i-it's not *that* bad," she replied.

Benigoa stretched out her hand, and a document appeared in her hand.

I nodded as I looked through the document.

Benigoa sighed in relief when she saw me nodding.

“It’s not… that bad, right?” Benigoa asked.

It wasn't bad, but it wasn't worthy of feeling relieved.

‘Yeah, it’s not that bad… like you said.’

The continent could definitely take care of this amount of debt, but it was an amount she wouldn’t be able to pay back by herself.

‘How has she been surviving? Has she been eating? I mean, it’s fine to borrow holy power, but why is the interest rate so high?’

It was so horrible that I stopped looking at it.

‘Isn’t this considered a fraud?’

It wouldn't be enough to call it a fraud. I thought she had been wasting her holy power on useless things, but I was mistaken, as she had no holy power to waste.

“I’ll work hard as well, Lee Ki-Young. I-I won’t ask you to pay my debt. I’ll take care of it. I’m really looking forward to the future,” Benigoa said.

‘No, you can’t pay back your debt.’

It was impossible right now, but I would really love to see the faces of the guys who had allowed Benigoa to borrow holy power from them. Those guys were a bunch of fraudsters. There was a saying about how the rich tend to be scrooges, but those guys were worse than demons.

“I-I’m honestly not sure if this is the right thing to do, but… I never thought you sincerely wanted to work with me… I decided to trust you just as much as you trust me, Lee Ki-Young,” Benigoa stuttered.

It sounded like she had no ulterior motives at all and that my honest words had simply swayed her to join me.

‘This is nice.’

It was small, but it was problematic enough to give me a headache.

“B-But, Lee Ki-Young. This is safe, right? You do have another plan, right? I’m sure you already know this, but managing the continent outside of the protection of the higher-ups is difficult… Of course, there's a precedent, but… we’ll be more easily exposed to threats,” she warned.

“Yes, I’m aware of that,” I said.

It was obvious, but I wasn't naive enough to think that there wouldn't be any problems when it came to going independent. It wasn't like the higher-ups would come to the continent and kick up a fuss. There would probably be some things we need to document, and we would get sued as well, but I was confident that there wouldn't be any malicious attacks, as they described themselves as on the side of the light.

The problematic issue was when variables. What if something unexpected happened, such as a problem in the system, or what if the demons decided to come to the continent to cause trouble?

I know they had a rule about direct intervention, but it didn't mean that we didn’t need them at all. We needed them to stop Lucifer and demons like her from acting freely.

It was applicable to the Outer God as well.

I was worried that something untoward would happen once they stopped assisting us.

The budget was being used to manage the dimension and to delay the Outer God's approach. Basically, it was like insurance. They get power and come up with a reason to intervene in exchange for a minimum amount of safety.

Becoming completely independent meant we wouldn’t be part of their insurance anymore, which meant that we’d be responsible for all the risks.

Well, my assumption wouldn’t really affect this continent, but…

Why?

It was because we had Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung.

“It’s all ready, right?” Benigoa asked.

“We have Hyun-Sung,” I told her.

“*Ah!*”

“Didn’t you see him flying around and splitting open the sky?” I asked.

“Y-You’re right,” Benigoa stuttered.

“I don't think the higher-ups will take care of the things Hyun-Sung cannot handle. The Sunset Swordsman is with us, so you don’t have to worry too much about security. *Pfft!*” I chuckled.

“*Pfft…* You’re right! The God of Sunset will take care of it, right? Even if the demons appear, he’ll just get rid of all of them,” Benigoa said.

Why was she copying me?

‘I really did a good job at raising our regressor.’

“We won’t need the higher-ups, right, Lee Ki-Young?” Benigoa asked.

The miracle of one’s boss turning into a stranger in just one day—the change in her attitude was just as fast as mine.

“Anyway, I never really liked them. They never did anything for me, and all they did was order me around. Would it hurt them to help me out a little? They’re always talking about rules this, rules that. We don’t need their help anymore! We have the God of Sunset! *Hahaha*!” Benigoa laughed.

“…”

"The name—God of Sunset—really fits him well, considering his theme. It was a good choice. Whenever people look up at the sky, they’ll think about the God of Sunset. It's beautiful with a mystical mood. He's going to earn a ton of holy power, and if we look at some myths, the very first followers of that god are very loyal,” Benigoa explained.

“No wonder he was getting a lot of holy power,” I commented.

“…”

“…”

“How do you know that, Lee Ki-Young?” Benigoa asked.

“I think the holy power Hyun-Sung is receiving is being poured into me. I don’t know why, but I’m getting almost a hundred percent of the holy power he’s getting… I'm actually curious; why is this happening?” I asked.

“I see…” she mumbled.

“Has this ever happened before?” I asked.

“It doesn’t happen often, but…” she paused.

“…”

“It’s probably because the God of Sunset trusts you, Lee Ki-Young,” she continued.

“…”

“It might be easier to understand if you think of yourself as a god above the God of Sunset, as the God of Sunset's object of faith. Actually, maybe not. It might be kind of different from that… I can’t really describe it with words.

"The point is that the God of Sunset trusts you, and you're supposed to give him a portion of the holy power you're receiving. I don’t know his current situation. I think it’s best to discuss this when the God of Sunset officially becomes a god,” she suggested.

I nodded in agreement, but I didn't think there was any need for me to give him a portion of my holy power.

‘I just need to manage it for him.’

I wasn't being greedy here. This was for the sake of both Kim Hyun-Sung and the continent. Kim Hyun-Sung had a habit of wasting holy power, so my decision was the

best decision.

'He couldn't even manage his own money that he had to use the guild's money, so I don't think he'll be able to manage his own holy power… Giving him a part of my holy power is too much.'

It wasn't a strange decision, considering Kim Hyun-Sung's financial literacy level.

I had no idea what he had been spending all his salary on; his bank account was definitely negative for quite a while now.

He definitely thought I wasn't aware, but I knew that he was discreetly receiving funds from Miss Kim Mi-Young. He was worried about me finding out because I received news that he secretly took out a loan. In the end, it wasn't a big problem since it was paid using the guild's funds, but giving holy power to Kim Hyun-Sung was the same thing as throwing away money.

'It's just ridiculous.'

Of course, I could give him some allowance.

I could also warn him to be wary of his spending by saying that things were difficult lately and that he had to use his holy power sparingly.

I could also tell him that I was already giving him a lot of holy power.

If he were to rebel, I would pretend to be annoyed and complain about how he wants so many things when we barely had holy power to spend.

And if I were to pretend like I was suffocating while grabbing my stomach, he'd definitely stay quiet.

Anyway, he had no idea how much holy power he was making, so it should be fine

I honestly thought I was being a bit harsh, but this was the right thing to do.

There was a reason behind the existence of financial planners. I also thought it was better to let someone manage one's assets. If I were to play along with him and use holy power haphazardly, I was sure we'd be broke the next day.

'Yeah, I guarantee it.'

Of course, I'd spend holy power when necessary. I'd also spend holy power to fend off those demon bastards if they ended up invading us.

However, if I were to leave the holy power in Kim Hyun-Sung's hands, we might end up in a situation where we didn't have enough holy power to spend on essentials.

In addition, Hyun-Sung didn't need holy power right now, and there wasn't any reason for me to share it with him.

There wasn't anything he needed to spend the holy power on because it wasn't like he was maintaining the continent.

It would be best if I refrained from saying anything about it. It would be kind of tiresome, but I had to take care of it for the sake of better management and for the God of Sunset's sake.

"I'll tell the God of Sunset myself," I told her.

"Okay, but don't make him too sad. Eighty percent is the norm, but you have to give him at least seventy-five percent. The fact that the holy power that the God of Sunset should be receiving is going to you means that he trusts and respects you that much. You're just showing your appreciation. You understand what I'm saying, right?" Benigoa asked.

I knew what she was saying, but bad habits and customs were there to be broken.

Based on the holy power I was receiving, even as we speak, three percent had to be enough per year. Actually, three percent was still a lot. 1.5 percent had to be good enough.

"Of course, Benigoa. Now, you can sign here. *Ah*, I think we're going to lack manpower… Do you…" I paused.

"Yes! If I ask, I'm sure Lauren will come. Regarding Elune… I'll probably have to convince him first. As for Varian, I'm not really sure. You probably don't need to worry about getting workers too much. You already have some people on the continent."

“What?”

“The… Jung Ha-Yan girl… and the red-headed unni who fights fiercely."

‘I’m sure you’re older than her, why call her 'unni'?’

“They’re still unstable, but those two—I mean, the things they’ve achieved…”

They had achieved something so great they could appear in myths.

Anyone would be in awe of them, so it was only natural for some people to be devoted to them. Of course, we’d need to prepare many things to turn them into gods, like the God of Sunset, but they were on the cusp of becoming gods.

“This is kind of a special case, but the child who got into a contract with Lonovera seems to have potential as well…” Benigoa mentioned.

“What?”

“It’s been a while, disgusting human. Actually, I shouldn’t be calling you that anymore. Should I call you 'partner'? What should I call you?” A voice echoed somewhere.

I turned toward the voice and saw a man wearing glasses that didn’t suit him at all. His hair was combed back, making him look neat. This wasn’t his original look, and I instantly identified him. I was the one who had sent him the contract, after all, and there was also no way I would forget his voice.

“It’s been a while, my dearest and respected Belial,” I greeted.

“I have already signed the contract. I wouldn’t have been able to come here if I hadn't signed it, you disgusting, dirty light. There’s no need for flattery. I should be the one flattering you,” Belial said.

“That’s not true since none of us are above one another, *haha*,” I laughed.

“You’re right,” Belial said.

“…”

"..."

"Is it okay for you to betray Lucifer?" I asked.

"I'm sure she'll be happy as well. She's probably touched that I've grown this much," Belial answered.

"That's good," I commented.

Belial's eyes narrowed into slits as he smiled. "The 27th Legion will follow you and your orders."

CHAPTER 775
THE LAST (8)

“It’s no longer the 27th Legion, right? The reborn continent will remember you as the one and only demon, ruling over ten thousand demons,” I said.

“I just liked the content of the contract you sent me,” Belial said.

“I really appreciate you agreeing to my offer despite the lack of vision,” I apologized.

‘I’m sure he’s worried about many things.’

It probably wasn’t an easy decision. Unlike Benigoa, who was pretty in a corner, Belial was in a different kind of situation. He owned several companies, so I was surprised by his decision. Of course, I was sure he wasn’t planning on abandoning those companies completely, but…

‘I honestly wasn’t expecting him to accept the offer.’

That was the reason why I just sent him the contract instead of inviting him here like what I did with Benigoa. He was smiling, so I didn’t know what he was thinking, but I didn’t feel the need to be suspicious of him.

The moment he signed that contract was the moment he shared the same fate as everyone here. He wouldn’t suffer that big of a loss, anyway. I was sure he wanted to invest in one place rather than investing in multiple things.

He probably liked the part of the deal where I'd announce him as the one behind the invasion of the demons wearing angel masks.

One thing I was sure of was that Belial’s attitude had changed a lot compared to before.

It wasn’t anything special, but the fact that he came here in his human form told me that he was being considerate of me. He believed that rather than showing his indescribable demonic appearance, being in his human form would make it easier

for me to put my guard down or make him more likable.

That was probably the idea behind his current form…

'Why was he wearing glasses though?'

He wasn't trying to look smart in front of us, right?

I was sure it wasn't a simple reason like that.

He could've brought it and transformed it into an artifact.

I was sure he had a reason for wearing glasses, but that was none of my concern.

The important part was that I had a trusted partner here.

I turned and saw Benigoa staring at me as if she'd been betrayed.

The angels—I meant the orbs of lights, who despised demons surrounded Belial.

Dialugia reacted the same way. She got up quietly and put her guard up. The silver orb of light even moved, attacking Belial.

I had no idea if I would call that an attack, but the silver orb of light slammed itself into Belial while emitting a radiant light.

It was pretty ridiculous, but it felt like it was telling me to run away.

"Looks like I'm not welcome here," Belial said.

"Lee Ki-Young? What's going on? W-Why is he here, too?" Benigoa asked.

"Do you have any idea what you're doing right now? I can't believe you brought a demon lord here," Dialugia complained.

"It seems I'm unwanted here… Should I just go back?" Belial asked.

"Of course not. Please have a seat, Belial. Please calm down, Benigoa. I'll explain everything," I said.

“It’s been a while, Benigoa,” Belial greeted.

“I won’t talk to a demon,” Benigoa said.

“You’re talking to me right now.” Belial pointed out.

“I can’t hear you, I can’t hear you, I can’t hear you,” Benigoa repeated.

“You don’t need to be so sensitive about it, Benigoa.

"We’re already bound because of the contract we had signed. Think of it as an extension of that contract, and you're definitely going to feel a lot better. If I may add one more thing, no matter how much you deny it, what happened between us will not disappear. I’m sure you remember it better than I do…” Belial explained.

“T-That’s…”

“It’s like he said, Benigoa. This is an extension of *that* contract,” I told her.

“You mean… that *thing* we did last time?” she asked.

‘Yeah, the thing we made up last time. You remember how much holy power you got that time, right?’

Of course, she could still remember it.

“It’s not easy to achieve things in this day and age. Light can only exist if there’s darkness and vice versa. I just think maintaining that balance is the top priority. Even though we’re working on the same continent, we’re in different departments, so we won’t be seeing each other often,” Belial said.

“But still…”

“The war between darkness and light has long passed. A community with common interests working together is the future of the continent, and we strive for that future,” I told Benigoa.

“But B-Belial is a demon…” Benigoa stuttered.

“Belial's threat on the continent is the driving force that those living on the continent

will need to seek us out. I do feel bad about the fear they'll have to endure, but Belial's darkness will become the sunlight that will make the continent shine brightly.

"You've experienced it once, Benigoa. Remember the things we can achieve with that amount of holy power. The continent will advance a lot in the blink of an eye. Our finance team has determined that if we hold an event every five years, we can obtain a budget large enough to maintain the continent for a hundred years," I explained.

I glanced over at Dialugia and saw that she was forcing herself to look away.

I stared deeply at her, and I saw her nodding, eventually joining the conversation.

"It's exactly 132 years. O-O-Once every 5 years is enough to get holy power that can last 132 years…" Dialugia stammered.

"Good job, Miss Diaugia," I said.

"…"

"B-But still… that's a bit… I still have dignity I need to uphold…" Benigoa argued.

"That's not all, Benigoa. Now that we have Belial with us, our subsidiary company will become the driving force to target bigger markets," I added.

"…"

"How many companies do you currently own, Belial?" I asked.

"Well… I haven't really been counting, but… we should have more than enough," Belial replied.

"Now, let's all close our eyes and think," I told them.

"…"

"…"

"I'm talking about the other dimension Belial owns, not our continent. I'm sure those dimensions are desolate by now. There are no dreams or hope, and the demons have

already destroyed everything. Those dimensions have already been engulfed by darkness.

"Now, let's think of another continent somewhere in those dimensions and imagine that the same continent is currently in the middle of an apocalypse," I continued.

"D-Dirty demons… You wicked…" Benigoa cursed.

'You're really into this.'

"It's a continent even the gods had given up on. It's a hopeless continent," I said.

"N-No… we shouldn't give up," Benigoa stuttered.

"The 27th Legion appears again in the place where there's no hope. Belial descends to that place with the army of demons and stomps on any remaining hope," I described.

"You jerk… You jerk! You disgusting demon bastard!" Benigoa yelled.

"Belial will then shout toward the humans," I trailed off before continuing, "Only Benigoa can stop me. I should be thankful that the goddess of radiant light has given up on this place. Die mortals!"

I'd like to see them fight again. They had great teamwork.

"I'm sorry… I-I'm sorry that I abandoned it…" Benigoa mumbled. Benigoa was really immersed in the story as she kept her eyes closed. She seemed pretty angry based on how she was trembling with clenched fists. Her brows were even knitted tightly.

"The humans are praying. Oh, Benigoa! Please save us. Please protect us from Belial's terror! Where are you? Where are you, oh, goddess of radiant light?" I said.

"I-I'm right here! I'm here!" Benigoa shouted.

"Also…"

Clap!

"A radiant light will appear on the desolate land," I added.

“*Ah!*” Benigoa exclaimed.

“The continent will forever remember your legend, and you’ll remain as a legend on the continent that has remained desolate for a long time. A new god's appearance meant that the existing god would be forgotten.

"You’ll become the greatest light in that continent. You’ll become their hope,” I continued.

“…”

“…”

‘She really likes money.’

I had never seen her be so honest with her feelings.

When Benigoa opened her eyes, I saw her pupils trembling.

She had her pride to uphold, so she didn't agree to it right away.

However, seemed to be looking at me as if she were asking me to pressure her more. I had no choice but to nod, but I didn't really have to do that, as I was sure she’d agree, anyway. I just had to play my cards right, of course.

“We’re just going to take a step back to take a great leap forward for the light," I told her.

It was Belial's turn.

“As you already know, I’m a soft-liner. The last thing I want is for humans to perish and lose hope. Fear exists because there’s hope. Humans who have nothing to lose fear nothing.

"If the current gods hadn't rejected us, the dimensions would probably be in a better situation. Humans are the only ones who suffer in the fight between darkness and light, and I want to put an end to this long war, Benigoa,” Belial explained.

“You must make a decision, Benigoa,” I commented.

“I won’t say that I want the humans to have hope, but I don’t want them to live only in darkness,” Belial added.

“The light that will brighten the darkness is you, Benigoa,” I told her.

“The unity of light and darkness. We’ll be the one to pave the new way,” Belial said.

“Decide…” Benigoa mumbled.

“Decide!” I shouted.

“…”

“…”

“T-There’s nothing else I can do. Since you said it like that, I guess I have no other choice,” Benigoa said. It was amusing how she signed the contract while looking away, and I couldn't help but wonder how Benigoa was born.

‘Was she originally one of the higher-ups? Or did she start from the continent and end up here?’

If it were the latter, I wonder what kind of life she had lived as a human.

The details about her birth weren't written, so there had to be untold stories about her.

However, those details weren't important enough for me to start asking her questions.

It didn’t seem that important to her, either…

The important part was that we were all working together.

“I have to do it… for the continent. Right, Lee Ki-Young?” Benigoa asked.

Benigoa’s remaining pride wasn’t allowing her to make eye contact with Belial.

Honestly, I thought it’d be best if they didn't make eye contact because Belial looked as if he was questioning why Benigoa wasn’t a demon lord.

Benigoa would definitely not be able to handle Belial's amused gaze.

Benigoa was mumbling something while smiling awkwardly, and the sight made me understand why the Four Angels criticized the existing gods.

Benigoa inadvertently glanced at Belial and met his gaze, allowing her to realize what she looked like right now.

“You’re greedier than the Demon of Greed,” Belial muttered. However, I was sure Benigoa had heard him.

“…”

“So… everything is settled, right? I’m looking forward to it. *Hm*…” Benigoa said.

“Aren’t you curious about what the army's HR team is up to? That place has nothing to do with me now, but I wonder if they’re even doing their jobs properly…” Belial muttered.

'Stop muttering! She can hear you.'

“S-So what are we going to do now? *Ah!* You’re not planning on staying here, right, Lee Ki-Young? I think we should have a meeting about how we’re going to control the continent,” Benigoa suggested.

She was trying to change the subject.

“I’m sure you want to go back, so I understand. I can’t do that since I’m not courageous at all. It won’t be easy, but still… it's possible if we work hard and collect holy power. Wait, is it even possible? Is it impossible?” Benigoa questioned.

It was a topic I couldn’t ignore.

“Is that possible?” I asked, but it was a stupid question.

If Lucifer could bring me back, then I could go back down there by using my holy power.

The problem was that…

“I’m not sure… There’s still a lot I don’t know… It's possible if…” Benigoa paused.

“…”

“If you stay here and collect holy power for about 50,000 years,” Benigoa continued.

What? I looked at Benigoa because I thought I misheard, but she nodded as if confirming that she wasn’t joking at all.

I looked down and saw the guild members in the middle of a meeting.

- We’re going to bring back Mr. Ki-Young no matter how long it takes.

'What the hell are you talking about? It matters to me, Hyun-Sung.'

- You’re right. I’m sure hyung-nim is waiting for us. I’m sure he’ll keep waiting for us!

I wasn't *that* patient.

‘What the hell is going on… ’

I honestly thought there was another way, but the other method was…

Reuniting with them after 50,000 years?

“…”

It was so ridiculous I couldn’t even laugh.

CHAPTER 776
THE LAST (9)

'But 50,000 years is too long.'

"We can end the meeting here, right? W-When is our next be? I think I'm going to create my own office here! *Ah!* I'm also going to talk to Lauren and the others," Benigoa said.

"I'll leave it up to you," I told her.

"Let's do our best, Lee Ki-Young! This is only the beginning, so let's give it all we've got!" Benigoa exclaimed.

I nodded, but I was still worried about what I had heard from her.

'Shit, 50,000 years.'

Dialugia looked troubled as well, so the information was definitely shocking. Obviously, she didn't want to exhaust her lifespan in a place like this. Benigoa was grinning mindlessly, while Dialugia looked pale.

I was sure I didn't look all that different from her.

'Maybe not as bad as her.'

I was sure I could shorten it, as I could get even more holy power than what she had calculated. However, it would still take a lot of time. It was hard to calculate exactly how much time it would take, but it would take a ton of holy power to descend upon the continent, so her calculation wasn't that off, actually.

"I'll be heading back as well," Belial said.

"Thank you for your hard work, Belial," I said.

'Exactly how long will it take? How much time do I need?'

Ten thousand years? Actually, I could reduce that to a few thousand years. If I were lucky, it would take just a few hundred years.

However, that wasn't enough to comfort me.

It'd be great if the guild members found a way to bring me back, but that was easier said than done. Getting holy power wasn't an easy task to do.

I was embarrassed to say this, but I really wanted to go back to the Blue Guild.

"Do we really have to wait?" Dialugia asked.

"If we execute the plan quickly, we might be able to go back within ten thousand years, but…" I paused.

"I can't wait that long," Dialugia said.

"Neither can I, Dialugia," I told her.

"Is there no other way?" she asked.

"I'm thinking…" I replied. I figured out the reward for the bet I had made with Lucifer.

'Bringing back Lee Ki-Young?'

That was probably the reward…

The reason I made this secret space was that I had yet to receive my reward from her.

If I were to go back to the continent after receiving the reward from her, she'd have no choice but to intervene with the continent.

She was probably thinking of reviving me with her own powers.

I was convinced that her goal was to turn the Three Angels into managers, make the continent completely independent from the outside world, and get holy power by winning over Belial and Benigoa.

However…

‘Maybe she never expected it to take this long.’

No, she definitely knew that it'd take that long.

‘I hope she didn’t think I’d be able to endure it for that long.’

No way.

‘Why the hell were my memories erased?’

It was because I didn’t want Lucifer to discover my plan.

Everything had to be done without her knowledge.

‘What about now? We’re at a place where Lucifer can’t reach us, anyway. If I really had to gather enough holy power on my own to go back down there, then I need some details. If staying in this place for 50,000 years was really my ending, then I should have remembered something by now. There’s no reason for me to see Lucifer, anyway…’

There was probably something else I had to do.

Perhaps I had to meet Lucifer again.

“Do I have to meet Lucifer again?” I mumbled.

“What?”

“I need to meet Lucifer…” I said.

If the reason why I hadn't been able to retrieve my memories was that I had to fool Lucifer, then the answer was pretty obvious. I needed to talk to her. It would be best to discuss the contract and the rewards with her. I wasn’t sure how losing my memories equaled fooling her, but Lucifer had the answer.

The problem was that I was uncertain about everything, and I didn’t have enough evidence to prove that my assumption was correct. Actually, it was more like I didn’t have any evidence. All I had was a strong belief that my assumption was correct. It was a risky gamble.

I wasn’t dumb enough to not roll the dice when I had a high chance of winning, but I wasn’t sure if my judgment was right.

“Are you talking about… Lucifer?” Dialugia asked.

“I think she’s our first clue,” I told her.

‘Should I try contacting her right now?’

Was I supposed to go straight to the point, even though I wasn't certain about anything? I didn’t have enough information, after all. It was also pretty risky, as she might have a clue about what I was trying to do.

‘What did I miss? Actually, even if I figure out what I’ve missed, it won’t solve anything.’

I was sure I made this space so that I could go back and manage the continent without anyone noticing. If I were asked if I was all set, I would answer with a resounding no.

I just managed to win over Belial and Benigoa; I had yet to achieve anything. I’d probably meet Lucifer once I was satisfied with what I had achieved. I wasn't going to wait fifty thousand years, but I needed extra time.

‘I need help.’

What was Ji-Hye noona doing lately.

Since she had definitely heard the news by now, why was she still missing? I looked around using the Telescope, but I couldn't see her at all. She had concealed herself pretty well, as I couldn’t find a single clue about her whereabouts.

She probably left with Sun Hee-Young, so finding Sun Hee-Young might be faster.

‘I definitely saw her a few days ago.’

“Where the hell did she go?” I questioned.

It didn’t make sense that a mere human could avoid the Telescope of light. I tried to find a way to contact Lonovera, but I couldn’t find traces of her either.

I was sure Belial could find out where she was right now, but I shook my head at the idea. Lonovera was no longer a part of the 27th Legion, and there was no guarantee that she wasn't on the same side as Lucifer.

'I need a channel to communicate with others.'

The Regressor Instruction Manual was still active, so I could send messages to Kim Hyun-Sung, but that was all. I needed a more direct way to communicate. I could send a divine message through Benigoa, but I was worried about the higher-ups.

I looked down and saw the guild members talking to each other.

Elena had returned to the Blue Guild, and I saw her talking to the others while wiping her tears away. More people had gathered compared to the last time I took a peek at them.

Kim Hyun-Sung, Park Deok-Gu, Jo Hye-Jin, Ahn Ki-Mo, Hwang Jung-Yeon, Kim Ye-Ri, Ha-Yan, Han Sora, Park Lian, Alps, Lee Chang-Ryeol, Yoo Ah-Young, and Miss Kim Mi-Young. Aside from Sun Hee-Young, who ended up following Lee Ji-Hye, the guild members had gathered and were talking to each other.

I couldn't help but smile at the nice view.

They seemed to be done discussing many things because they were in the middle of organizing the things that they had discussed.

- Basically, the sub guild master became a god managing the continent?

- That's right.

- And we need to find a way to bring him back…

- Basically.

- Thinking that hyung-nim is really watching over us is giving me strength. He might even be watching over us now.

- Do you really think that he wants to come back?

Of course…

- I’m sure he does.

Of course, I wanted to come back.

I heard Jung Ha-Yan and Han Sora whispering to each other.

- You're the only one I'm going to tell you this, but if Oppa doesn’t come down here, I-I’m going to go up there. You’ll come with me, right?

- *Ah*… yes, Miss Jung Ha-Yan. Of course, I’ll go with you. If that’s even possible…

- I-I think it’s going to take some time, and it’ll take even more time if you come with me. It’ll be difficult, but I can endure it. Obviously, we won’t need to go up there if Oppa comes down first, but you never know. You need to get ready to go up there with me, okay?

I had never sent her a message to come up here, but it seemed like she had found a clue. She had discovered the holy power accumulating inside of her.

Han Sora was nodding, but she looked kind of pale.

Jung Ha-Yan’s suggestion probably sounded like she was telling Han Sora to die with her.

- *Ah*… okay. But wouldn’t it be easier to bring him here rather than us going up there?

- Y-Yeah, that’s better. I just said it just in case so that y-you can prepare yourself…

-…

I couldn't help but laugh at the sight, and my anxiety was assuaged.

Elena and Jo Hye-Jin were talking as well. Elena was a priest, so she was probably wondering if bringing back a god who had gone to the heavens up above was even the right thing to do. She was also wondering if I really wanted to come back.

- What if Mr. Lee Ki-Young doesn’t want to come back? What if he wants to stay beside Elune…

-…

I thought about it again, but I definitely wanted to go back down.

I had to send another message to Hyun-Sung later once I got the chance.

It seemed like they were discussing many things, but they couldn't come up with other ideas. It was understandable since I couldn’t think of any ideas either. I couldn't rely on them to find a way.

- Stop talking nonsense. I told you earlier that hyung-nim is definitely waiting for us. We just need to find a way to bring him back.

- I agree with Mr. Deok-Gu.

- Me, too.

The Park-Ki-Ri siblings.

- I have never heard of bringing back a god. I’ve read many books, but I don’t recall reading anything similar to this. I think it’s best if I read the books that are in the Order of Benigoa's library.

I was sure Hwang Jung-Yeon’s memories would be helpful.

- I’ll also look around to see if there’s something that can be helpful to us.

I wasn't confident that Yoo Ah-Young and Lee Chang-Ryeol would be helpful, but why were they so close?

I was sure it’d be difficult for them to make a decision in a short period of time. Watching them probably wouldn't help me, so perhaps I should focus on my task.

As I was about to look away, I heard Kim Hyun-Sung’s voice.

- I think…

- Yes?

- We should build a temple first.

-…

- We might be able to communicate with Mr. Ki-Young if we build a statue.

Oh.

- That’s a good idea. Leave the temple to us. We’re the ones who built the advanced bases, after all.

- Mr. Ki-Mo, Mr. Deok-Gu, and I built it before. So. It’ll be. Helpful.

Wouldn't it be a better idea to let a professional handle it?

- S-Sora can b-build the statue.

Well, Han Sora was a professional. I could vouch for her.

- I’ll see if we can get permission. Our budget…

Miss Kim Mi-Young acted quickly.

- You don’t have to worry about the budget. We can use all of the guild’s funds, and if we still don’t have enough, I’ll find a way.

-…

- I have connections. They can be trusted.

I hope he wasn't talking about Garosh and Cash or Miju Love. He couldn't get involved with them at all cost.

The depressing atmosphere had improved.

‘Yeah, let’s take it one step at a time. There’s no reason to try to handle everything and make myself feel anxious.’

The guild members were doing everything they could.

“They’re going to build a temple, Miss Dialugia,” I said.

CHAPTER 777
THE LAST (10)

“Lee Ki-Young… does that mean there won’t be any other updates for the time being?” Benigoa asked.

“That’s right. Closing the rift should be our top priority. It's better to perform the update once we've stabilized the unstable system,” I replied.

“B-But won’t the adventurers wait for new dungeons to appear? I brought dungeons and hid easter eggs all over the continent. Can you take a look?

"Look at this. It’s one of the legends that’s been buried for a long time… It’s the land where ancient warriors sleep. The story begins with the sound of ancient warriors clashing swords every night. I think the clear reward will help the humans. I think it’ll activate if we invest a bit of holy power. It’s basically free,” Benigoa explained.

“…”

“…”

“No thanks,” I told her.

“Filling the narrative pages is important, Lee Ki-Young. We're not going to profit right away, but the fact that legends like this exist on the continent and influence the humans’ devotion—”

“Where is the dungeon located?” I asked.

“It’s in the area the humans call Castle Rock,” Benigoa answered.

“It’s in the holy nation,” I commented.

“It is…”

“The adventurer that clears this dungeon will most likely be one of your followers,” I

said.

“That might not be the case… You never know. I’m not offering this because I don’t want to see one of my followers make a name for themselves. It’s just, you know. We’re running out of content, and it’s bad if there's a lack of content for a long period of time.

"It's not going to help with the development of the continent. The humans will gradually become lazy… so we should start releasing—”

“It’s still a no,” I interrupted.

“I have my reasons for suggesting this. Do you really think I brought this to you for fun? They might get Legendary-rank stones or ores as rewards. They might even get a gem. Legendary-rank ores have all been exhausted, you know?”

‘I have nothing to say.’

Benigoa looked at me as if she was blaming me, and I honestly couldn’t retort.

“The situation is bad. Humans are exhausting the continent's resources for development and land reclamation. You’re aware that Legendary-rank items influence the things around them, right? If they keep using resources like this, it’s only a matter of time before the continent loses its balance.

"This example is a bit extreme, but imagine a world without the World Tree,” Benigoa explained.

“…”

“*Ah!* You’ve already experienced extreme situations like that. Looks like Fairy Lake Pebbles were used to build your temple. How much holy power was used to stop the Fairy Lake from getting tainted again? Looks like qutie a few Gem of the Sun was used as well. The temperature around that area went down a little, right?” Benigoa questioned.

“…”

“I heard the dwarves have been having a hard time because they haven't been able to acquire orichalcum. I heard it right, right? Looks like the ground has weakened

because they've been mining randomly, and the ecosystem of the monsters in the surrounding area has collapsed completely as well. You're really mean. You're really harsh, you know that?" Benigoa complained.

"I think… it'll be good to activate a few. I'll look over it when you give me the plan," I told her.

Benigoa nodded, seemingly delighted about winning the argument.

"I knew you'd say that, so I brought it, Lee Ki-Young," she said.

Benigoa even had it all planned.

When I read her proposal, I thought it wasn't that bad.

If they could get stones and ores, then they could probably deal with the continent's ongoing situation.

If I were to look at the bigger picture, I would say Benigoa wasn't wrong. The problem was that there were a few deceptive things in her proposal. I noticed unnecessary things in her proposal, and it seemed like she was trying to get approval for other things while getting approval for the plan she had suggested.

[Ranks and Dungeons]

[Mole Saint's Cozy Sanctuary]

There was no way it meant the saint of the moles.

It was definitely referring to a saint who had never left his underground temple even once. It was a dungeon created based on the legend of the saintess who was bossed around while living her entire life in the underground temple. The location was…

'Basement of Benigoa's temple… '

Activating the dungeon was pretty expensive, I thought perhaps activating the dungeon where the ancient warriors were sleeping might be cheaper. The reward wasn't clear, and the plan itself was pretty lacking.

I glanced at Benigoa and saw her avoiding my gaze.

I didn’t know what she was thinking, and I also had no idea about the Mole Saint's identity. Of course, I had no idea what her goal was, but I had no choice but to approve this. I was at fault as well. Actually, it wasn’t really my fault, but—no, it was my fault…

‘Damn you, Kim Hyun-Sung.’

As Benigoa had mentioned earlier, the problem was that they had used a variety of rare resources to build my temple.

I thought the Blue Guild and Kim Hyun-Sung were the only ones who would get affected by the funding problem, but I had never imagined that the heavens would get affected as well. Who would have known that building the temple of the saint of light who had sacrificed himself for the continent would affect the balance of the continent?

Of course, it wasn’t *that* big of a problem, but *it* was a problem.

I was so shocked that I had no idea what to say when she mentioned the Fairy Lake Pebble. We didn’t even activate the guardians protecting the lake in the first place because they’d just die with one swing of Kim Hyun-Ah’s sword.

That wasn’t the only issue.

They even went to the edge of the mine to get ores, woke up the spirit of the land that had to be activated, and destroyed it. They started siphoning a ton of resources in addition to the guild funds.

The problem was that every time Kim Hyun-Sung did something, my workload would increase. I thought it wouldn’t be a bad idea to build a fancy temple since they had already decided to build one, but I frowned, as that meant more work for me.

‘Damn it. I understand how they feel, though.’

I was sure they were curious about how they were supposed to build the temple and what they needed to do in order for me to enter the statue.

It was the place where the light of the continent would stay and the only channel where humans and god could communicate with each other. If they built a simple temple, there was no guarantee that the system would consider it a temple, so I was

sure Kim Hyun-Sung was frustrated.

'I'm sure he's also worried about whether I can enter the statue in the first place… '

It'd be nice if I could just enter any object, but the problem wasn't that simple.

It was basically applying to open a business to the system.

Just like how Yoo Ah-Young's items received ranks from the system the moment they were produced, temples received ranks as well. The higher the rank of a temple, the more things I could do.

Unfortunately, temples with no ranks were quite common.

I was sure Kim Hyun-Sung had no idea just how complex that was, but he definitely had an idea. It would be impossible for me to communicate with them unless they built the temple properly. I wasn't sure if spending money and building with Legendary-rank resources would transform the temple into a high-rank dungeon, but they probably only wanted to increase their chances of success.

I saw Benigoa running happily after getting my approval. Dialugia of the finance team sighed as she watched Benigoa. I also lowered my head because I noticed the guild members moving out.

'I wonder if they'll complete it today.'

It had already been six months, and the Blue Guild was almost done building the temple. I turned my attention elsewhere and saw a fancy temple.

'What if the system denies it because it's too fancy?'

I wasn't exaggerating, as the temple was fancier than Benigoa's temple. Dazzling gems filled the hallway, and anyone could tell that the temple was made out of expensive resources. Someone might even misunderstand and think that this was made by a rich person for luxury rather than a temple of worship.

The only thing that made it feel like a temple was the stained glass that filled the entire ceiling. I wasn't sure how they had achieved that, but whenever light struck the glass directly, the entire temple would appear as if it were bathing in sunset.

It looked like they had used magic to produce that glass, but I didn't know the details.

One thing I was sure of was that they had spent a ton of money on this.

'The Blue Guild is okay financially, right?'

It didn't seem to be the case when I saw Miss Kim Mi-Young's face. She had requested help from the Sacred Democratic Country and other nations to build a temple for the saint of light, but the guild itself seemed to be in a bad financial situation. I completely understood how she felt because she definitely had to sell the Blue Guild's properties.

Meanwhile, Han Sora was busy creating the sculpture.

'She's skilled enough to change jobs.'

I recalled her getting a message about changing jobs.

She had denied it for her future, but she'd definitely be fine even if she changed jobs.

"How did she make it look exactly like me?" I questioned.

"She glamorized you a lot," Dialugia said.

"She glamorized me a little," I argued.

"No, it's a lot," Dialugia argued.

The wings on my back were spread wide, and my arms were placed lightly on my chest.

The Fairy Pebbles and the Gem of the Sun embedded in my eyes made the statue appear like it was truly alive.

I was wearing the same outfit I wore during the memorial service. The details were impressive as if a master sculptor had carved the statue. Its skin looked really soft, and the clothes it was wearing looked like they were fluttering in the wind. Even its mouth, which was slightly open, looked like it was going to speak sweet words.

I was amazed by Han Sora, who was completely focused on her job.

'You look like you're sculpting as if your life depended on it.'

Jung Ha-Yan was staring at her quietly. Perhaps it was because it had been months since we last saw each other, but she looked pale. Han Sora could have taken care of her if she had been there next to Jung Ha-Yan.

However, I was sure she didn't have the luxury to take care of Jung Ha-Yan while working on the sculpture at the same time.

- A-A-Are you almost done, Sora?

- Yes, for now… but I'm not sure if I can say that… it's complete. I'm honestly not sure how to complete it… Is there even an end? Even if I say I'm done, I'm not sure if I can confidently say that I'm done…

- Y-You should take a break.

- *Ah*, yeah. I should take a break. Have you eaten yet?

- N-Not yet. I-I still haven't gotten my appetite back.

- I happened to bring some food, so let's eat together.

- O-Okay. B-But… do you think Oppa will enter that statue?

- He probably will. It's not complete yet, but the thing the guild master is worried about probably won't happen. I'm kind of worried about how the statue looks, but…

- H-He'll definitely enter the statue, right?

- Yes.

Jung Ha-Yan suddenly started crying.

- *Kgh… kgh… kgh…* He'll come, r-right?

She was definitely missing me.

- *Kgh… kgh… Hiccup… hiccup…*

Han Sora quickly wiped away her tears, but people would often cry harder once they were comforted. Seeing her crying broke my heart a little.

- I'm sure he'll come back, so please don't cry, Miss Jung Ha-Yan. If he doesn't come back, then we… We can go up together, right?

- Yeah… *Kgh…*

- Long distance… Think of it as a long-distance relationship. Once you're ready, you can see him whenever you want… It's no different from a long-distance relationship.

- *Hiccup…* Yeah…

'Stop bawling.'

Jung Ha-Yan's shoulders and chin were shaking.

Her situation was a bit hopeful at the beginning, but as time went on, things had definitely gotten a bit harder for her. I was in a difficult situation myself, so I was sure that she was in an even harder situation.

Honestly, I thought it was amazing that she managed to hold out for this long.

- Don't cry, Miss Jung Ha-Yan.

"Yeah, don't cry, Ha-Yan," I said.

- Don't cry… The sub guild master…

- ?

- ?

Jung Ha-Yan and Han Sora looked at the statue with a blank expression.

- O-Oppa?

[Player Han Sora has completed a masterpiece of the century.]

[A reward hasn't been registered.]

[Player Han Sora will not be able to receive a reward.]

[Activating the Mythic-rank statue…]

CHAPTER 778
THE LAST (11)

'Mythic?'

How did this happen?

[The Mythic-rank statue has spurred the temple's barrier into activation.]

[Players within the barrier will automatically recover HP and Mana.]

[Players within the barrier will receive increased Resistance.]

[Holy power has begun to reside within the barrier.]

[The land within the barrier has been purified.]

[Any curses inflicted on praying priests are lifted.

[Players within the barrier are indefatigable.]

[Infinite faith has been imbued into the priests. 1.5 times additional holy power will be obtained.]

'1.5 times additional holy power?'

The messages rendered me speechless. I knew they were positive messages without reading each and every one of them, and it was so impressive that my jaw dropped to the floor.

The part about obtaining additional holy power was enough to make me question if I had read it wrong. It was so shocking that I had no idea what to say.

The bright sunset illuminated the statue.

I wasn't sure if it was because of the halo, but the statue looked even more holy.

Han Sora and Jung Ha-Yan were staring at the statue again. Jung Ha-Yan's tear and snot-stricken face beamed with a smile, so she was definitely feeling better.

However, Han Sora's expression caught my attention as well. She was staring at the statue with an incredulous look. She had created the statue with her own two hands, but she looked like she couldn't believe that she had made the statue in front of her.

'Wait, I shouldn't just stand around like this. I need to make her change her job first. Why are you still a Black Mage? You've already found a suitable job for yourself, so you should go ahead and embark on a new path, don't you agree?'

[Would you like to offer a job change to Player Han Sora?]

[Searching for a Mythic-rank job. Unable to find a suitable Mythic-rank job for Player Han Sora.]

[Creating a Unique Mythic-rank job.]

'Shit, a unique mythic! A unique mythic! A unique mythic!'

[Sculptor Who Carves Life - Unique Mythic-rank]

[Offering the Unique Mythic-rank job: Sculptor Who Carves Life to Player Han Sora.]

The job name was definitely apropos. Just look at that statue—It seemed as if it were alive.

'Let's go, Sora. Let's make more of these!'

[Player Han Sora has rejected the offer.]

'?'

I looked at Han Sora's face and saw that she seemed dissatisfied with the offer.

It was like she didn't want to be a sculptor capable of imbuing life to her creations.

Was it because Kim Hyun-Sung and Jung Ha-Yan had pressured her? Was it because they intervened in every little thing? Had their complaints been *that* hard on you? Even I thought they were a bit too harsh, so the experience was definitely traumatic

for her.

'However, you shouldn't be nitpicking about these kinds of things. It's a mythic-ranked job!'

The statue she had made would give me 1.5 times additional holy power.

[Offering the Unique Mythic-rank job: Sculptor Who Carves Life to Player Han Sora.]

[Player Han Sora has firmly rejected the offer.]

Han Sora closed her eyes and prayed as if this wasn't right.

Obviously, she didn't want to experience *that* kind of pain again.

[Player Han Sora is pleading. She's resisting, saying she doesn't want to change jobs.]

'Just change jobs, damn it.'

[Player Han Sora says she'll never change her job. You can no longer recommend a job change.]

'Man, Han Sora. Ah, I shouldn't be doing this. I need to take care of our Ha-Yan.'

I forgot there was a more important matter because of Han Sora's job change.

It was a Mythic-rank statue, but there was no guarantee that I could maintain a connection with it for a long time, so I had to talk fast.

What was I supposed to say, though?

There were many things I wanted to say.

I had seen how they've been doing, but it was different from actually asking how they were doing. I wanted to overreact a bit, but I was a god, so I had no idea if that was even the right thing to do.

Moreover, any words spoken by the statue were basically divine words, so I had to be cautious. The people inside the temple gathered in front of the statue, and they all looked up as if they were possessed.

“Don’t cry, Miss Jung Ha-Yan,” Han Sora said.

It would be best if I talked formally.

- O-Oppa… Oppa. *Kgh…* Oppa… oppa…

“I have always been watching over you. I’ve been watching over you since the moment this temple and this statue was created,” I said.

‘They’ll like it if I say something like this… ’

“I understand that it’s been a lonely and difficult time, but I swear on my name that we’ll meet again. I don’t know when, but I’m sure we’ll meet again, so please don’t be sad,” I continued.

-…

Jung Ha-Yan was still crying.

‘She’s crying so much that it’s breaking my heart.’

“Stop crying,” I said.

Jung Ha-Yan bit her lips, and I wasn’t sure whether it was going to be helpful, but telling her that we’d meet someday had definitely comforted her.

I was sure she wanted to hear that the most.

She had come up with her own plan to come up here herself, and I was sure she was coming up with a plan in case we couldn't see each other again.

However, a part of her was definitely anxious.

Helping her relieve some of that anxiety was probably enough to make her feel relieved.

There were many things I wanted to say to her, but I didn’t know what to say.

Perhaps it was because it had been a while since I had a conversation like this, but I didn't know what to say.

'Where are the others? They haven't heard the news yet or what?'

Soon, I saw them running into the temple in a hurry.

Miss Kim Mi-Young had probably notified them.

- Is that you, hyung-nim?

'That's right. It's me, you pig.'

- Is it really you? Is it really you, hyung-nim?

It had been a while since I saw Park Deok-Gu react that way.

He was frowning while crying.

- Is it really you… *Heuk… heuuuk…*

The way he used his large hands to rub his eyes made him look like a child.

- I'm sorry. It's… It's because… It's because I'm stupid.

"It's not your fault," I said.

- I'm really sorry I wasn't by your side until the end… I'm sorry… I don't know what else to say… I'm… really…

Park Deok-Gu was choking up, and he couldn't speak properly. Now that I thought about it, I recalled him being out of it just like Kim Hyun-Sung at the time. He had been forcing himself to act positively, and he didn't even cry during the memorial service.

Honestly, I thought the pig was going to be the one to move my corpse or at least hold my picture at the very front of the line, but he didn't do that because he was denying my death.

I understood how he was feeling.

He had also locked himself in his room for quite a while.

- Hyung-nim… It's my fault that you ended up that way.

"It's not your fault, so please don't blame yourself," I told him.

- No matter what you say, it's my fault… I'm… sorry. I'm sorry for leaving you by yourself. I'm really… *Heuk…* sorry for not seeing you off during the memorial service. You suffered a lot after taking in an incompetent younger brother… I'm really sorry I couldn't be of any help to you. *Heuk… Kgh…* I'm such a fool…

"You're the hero of the continent. Remember that. Always remember the words that I've been telling you," I reminded him.

I told him that so that he could stop crying, but he was actually covering his face with both hands.

It seemed like he couldn't hold back his tears.

- *Heuuung… Heuk… Heuuuuuung…*

Why was he crying so loudly? Stop. So many people were watching

- *Heuuung!*

Ahn Ki-Mo, who had become a holy knight, said a short prayer and paid respects.

Meanwhile, Kim Ye-Ri was crying.

While we were together, she acted like she didn't like me at all, but it didn't seem to be the case.

She was trying to hold her tears back, and the tip of her nose had turned red.

I was about to say one more thing…

[You will soon be disconnected from the statue.]

I heard bad news. The time I could spend in the statue was so short that I couldn't help but laugh at how absurdly short it was. However, I finally understood why those gods didn't show themselves often.

Not only did it cost a lot to intervene in the real world, but it was also pretty difficult to intervene in the first place. There had been a precedent with Benigoa communicating with me using her statue, but I was in no position to test anything.

'Can I connect to the statue upon meeting certain conditions? Do I get a discount if the sunset lights my statue? There must be other conditions as well. I have to learn more about it.'

The statue was Mythic-rank, so it wasn't that expensive to connect to it.

'If I descend and connect without a statue or anything similar… '

The additional cost would be unimaginable. I finally understood why those bastards prioritized not getting involved as much as possible. Of course, it could just be because they were too broke to do so.

Of course, I understood the position of those gods who were against any intervention, and it might be a rule that existed to protect the gods.

It was no different from gambling, after all. They'd get their money's worth if they showed something impressive upon their descent. Otherwise, they could end up going bankrupt. They wanted to maintain and control the continent as well as the dimensions, so they had no choice but to minimize any intervention.

[You will soon be disconnected from the statue.]

'Where the hell is Kim Hyun-Sung?'

He was definitely wandering around to gather materials, as the temple wasn't exactly a hundred percent complete. He was definitely on his way now, though, as I was sure Miss Kim Mi-Young had called him.

As expected, I saw him running, but the problem was that he was too far away.

I heard him spread his wings.

- I'll be right there, so please tell him to wait for me a little longer.

He was talking to Miss Kim Mi-Young through the Goddess' Hand Mirror.

- I’m on my way. I’ll be there within 10 minutes. I see. What are they talking about right now? Yes. Actually, can you ask Miss Ha-Yan to teleport here? *Ah*, okay. I’ll be there as fast as I can.

This guy was on the brink of crying as well.

- Is he still there? Do you still hear his voice?

‘Ah, but I think I’m going to run out of time… Am I filming a drama or something? They always make it so that the protagonists never meet.’

It would be nice if I could greet Hyun-Sung, Jo Hye-Jin, and the remaining guild members, but I was really running out of time. Since I had already descended, I might as well deliver the divine message.

Now that I had a way of communicating with them, I had to put it to good use.

“My soulmate. If you can hear me, come here,” I said.

- What?

“My soulmate. If you can hear me, come here,” I repeated.

I could have said, *“I’m looking for Lee Ji-Hye of the Black Swan Guild,”* but there was no way she would come here if I had said that, so I thought it would be best to ask her to come here by referring to her as my "soulmate."

I didn't utter her name, but once she heard the news, I was sure she might come to the temple—no, she would *definitely* come to the temple. It was going to be difficult for me to get out of this situation without Ji-Hye noona’s help. The problem was that…

- What? *Ah*, I see. Okay. I’ll be there as soon as possible.

“…”

- He must… he must be looking—It sounds like Mr. Ki-Young is looking for me, Miss Kim Mi-Young.

Kim Hyun-Sung was receiving reports about the situation from Miss Kim Mi-Young in

real time, and he had definitely misunderstood me.

'No, Hyun-Sung.'

- Since he said "soulmate…"

'It's not you, man.'

- I'm not certain, but it's highly likely.

"Wait…"

[You have been disconnected from the statue.]

"*Ah…*"

"…"

"It's not you, man… Bring Ji-Hye noona to me. Please…!" I begged.

CHAPTER 779
THE LAST (12)

- I can't say for certain, but… I think it's because Mr. Ki-Young's soul and my soul are connected. The divine message behind us being soulmates is…

- That's probably the reason why one of your eyes changed color.

- You're right. It's probably the effect of the attribute. I don't know how that's possible or why this effect is still active, but if I were to take a guess… I think it's because of the bond that Mr. Ki-Young and I had built. Even now, I feel like I'm connected to him.

- I see…

- I think it's because I have a strong belief that Mr. Ki-Young will return. It's possible that Mr. Ki-Young hasn't completely cut ties with this world. If he truly had cut all ties with this world, then I would have lost this eye long ago.

- Your assumption does make sense, but the fact that the sub guild master's energy suddenly disappeared from the statue is…

- I think we have to meet certain conditions. I mean, divine messages and god's descent are pretty rare. Please check everything, including the exact time Mr. Ki-Young entered the statue, the environment, and everything nearby. If I'm right, he might appear again tomorrow. There haven't been cases of a god immediately descending once again the next day, but if Mr. Ki-Young has something he needs to tell me, I'm sure he'll come.

'Like I said, it's not you… '

Kim Hyun-Sung looked really serious.

'It's really not you… '

I was at a loss for words.

I wasn’t sure why Miss Kim Mi-Young was nodding, but his assumption definitely sounded convincing, as I would have agreed as well if I were her. The other guild members were nodding as well.

Jo Hye-Jin joined the conversation.

- The sub guild master’s divine message has been spreading, not only on Benigoa Net but through the media as well. The problem is how…

- There’s no need to stop it because I’m sure there's a reason behind Mr. Ki-Young's divine message. We didn't build him a temple to monopolize his messages.

- Understood.

They created a special episode out of the event and aired it on the Goddess’ Mirror all day. The guild members weren’t the only ones who were at the temple. I wanted everyone to hear my voice, but I didn't want it to happen like this.

I had no idea who filmed it, but the video depicted the Park-Ki-Ri siblings, Jung Ha-Yan, Han Sora, Miss Kim Mi-Young, and the construction workers staring blankly at the statue while listening to my divine message.

When I mentioned my soulmate, the media made their own interpretations of the meaning behind it.

However, Kim Hyun-Sung’s assumption was leaked, and the majority of people were saying that the Sunset Swordsmanship was my soulmate. Actually, it wasn’t just a simple leak.

‘Shit, when did they do that?’

Miss Kim Mi-Young had already made an official appearance and had announced it officially.

She didn't provide any detailed explanation of my divine message, but she said enough words for people to assume that my soulmate was Kim Hyun-Sung.

Even Father Basel took the lead and was promoting the miracle. He was saying things like the son of Benigoa had become a god managing the continent and that I had become a god that Benigoa had sent to the continent because she pitied the

humans.

The temple and statue had already been activated, and everyone seemed convinced that I had stepped into a new light. It was understandable. I was a saint who had lived an upright and pure life. I was the light that had sacrificed everything to protect the continent.

It'd be strange if I didn't become a new star in the sky.

I would either stand on Benigoa's left once she started asking about the sins the humans had committed and sacrifice myself to absolve everyone of their sins, or I would absolve everyone of their sins from above.

I was earning holy power because people were talking about many different topics related to me, but that wasn't important here. The problem was that people started gathering from all over the place.

- We're so lucky to be able to witness the miracle again, don't you agree? What do you think, George? Do you really believe Mr. Lee Ki-Young will show himself again?

- Who knows…

- I know your instincts have been good recently, so hurry up and tell me. Your nickname—Third-rate gambler George has long become a nickname of the past, hasn't it?

- Maybe he'll show up since that was the message.

- That's such an obvious and boring answer, George.

'Shit… I don't have enough holy power to go down there.'

No matter where I looked, I saw people discussing the same thing everywhere. The neighborhood bars, city square, and markets were filled with people talking about my descent.

- We must prepare for Mr. Lee Ki-Young's arrival. If the divine message is true, he'll show up. Please cancel my schedule today. When greeting him, there must not be a single mistake. Have you finished the discussion with the Blue Guild?

- Yes, Miss Oscar.

- It's a national event. I know we don't have a lot of time, but please give it your all.

- Yes, ma'am.

- I leave it up to you.

- There's one more thing I need to report. The members of the committee are raising their voices saying that today should be commemorated as National Memorial Day.

Even Oscar was into it, but Lee Ji-Hye was still missing.

A massive group of people—as big as the amount of people that attended the memorial service—was heading toward Lindel.

Shit, I had no idea the world had this many griffons. There were griffons everywhere, carrying high-ranking government officials, the wealthy, and powerful adventurers.

There were carriages on the ground, and they moved really fast. This was the first time I saw congested traffic in Lindel. There were some people who came from afar on foot, but there was news of the Sacred Democratic Country providing transportation to them.

Some had already arrived in Lindel. There were people everywhere outside the temple, and the guild staff were running around to make sure that everyone would enjoy their stay.

'Why are they using guild funds to pay for their meals? The guild is already broke, so why are you guys spending so much money?'

The guild had already gone bankrupt, but it seemed like even Miss Kim Mi-Young had decided to just let it be.

'Ah, shit. I don't want to go back. How am I going to take care of the guild's finances?'

- Light was definitely pouring the moment it happened.

- It was like the sunset. There was a halo behind the statue, and the statue was shining, making it look holy… It's to the point that hyung-nim looked like a different

person. His voice did sound a bit cold though… Still, I got the feeling that he was missing us.

- O-Oppa definitely said that we'll see each other. R-Right, Sora?

- Yes… he did.

- Also, I would feel really calm whenever I stand near the statue. It's like my troubles are melting away. As soon as we finished building the temple, a barrier appeared. I'm sure all of you know what that means. It means hyung-nim hasn't forgotten about us. He's always thinking about us. He's using the statue because he wants to help us somehow.

Even Jo Hye-Jin seemed a bit excited. On the first day, she was sad because she wasn't there to witness my first descent, but now, she was nodding in delight.

- I'm sure the sub guild master did something like that. It's like him to do something like that.

The door to the conference room opened, and Lee Chang-Ryeol walked into the room.

- Guild Master, the ceremonial outfit from the Vatican is here. If you're uncomfortable about receiving it, I'll decline.

They had made a ceremonial outfit, and I had an idea why the outfit was made. It was probably a priest outfit. The Order of Lee Ki-Young had yet to be established, but Father Basel probably thought that they needed an appropriate outfit. Out of the kindness in his heart, he proceeded to make the appropriate outfit.

I was sure there was a political motivation behind it as well. It probably wasn't Father Basel's idea, but I was sure they wanted people to know that the Order of Lee Ki-Young was lower than the Order of Benigoa. That was probably why they made the outfit.

It wasn't bad for the Blue Guild.

Ahn Ki-Mo was a holy knight, but he knew nothing about being a priest. Many people had gathered, so unity was important to create a sense of uniformity. It wouldn't be a good look if they looked out of place while serving a god. I was sure the priests from

the Order of Benigoa had taught them basic etiquette and movement.

'I should go down there.'

Having the option to decline meant that I wasn't being forced to go down there, but I basically had no choice. Things had gone viral, after all. Miss Kim Mi-Young seemed to be aware of this as she looked at Kim Hyun-Sung quietly.

- Guild Master.

-…

- I heard this priest uniform was made with the sub guild master in mind. If you feel uncomfortable, it's okay to decline, but I think it's best to show basic etiquette since many people are watching.

- Looks like we have no choice.

'This is bad.'

It felt like the situation was getting more and more serious.

I had no idea what to stop first. Kim Hyun-Sung seemed to be questioning whether he really deserved to wear that outfit, but the lore behind the outfit moved him. He knew he had to wear the uniform unless he had lost his mind.

In the end, he left the conference room, looking while staring at the outfit before him.

However, he still carried the outfit into his room and changed into it. I honestly wasn't sure if it looked good on him because priest uniforms were usually kind of loose-fitting, but it looked pretty tight on him. Kim Hyun-Sung felt awkward because he was looking at himself, but in the end, he smiled and held the rosario that was given to him.

'Ah, we're really screwed. Ah… this is really bad.'

Time passed too fast, and the priests of the Order of Benigoa soon arrived. They started teaching Kim Hyun-Sung and the other guild members, who had changed into priest uniforms, what to do before a god.

Everyone looked kind of awkward.

Park Deok-Gu looked awkward while he was praying, so Ahn Ki-Mo walked over and fixed his posture. However, even the holy knight himself didn't seem familiar with praying.

He didn't seem out of place when he was pretending to be Berserker Arkimo, so I found it amusing that he was struggling with something he was supposed to be extremely familiar with.

Jung Ha-Yan was doing her best, and she actually seemed really interested.

- H-How's this?

- *Ah*, let me help you.

- T-T-Thank you.

Elena was helping her, and she was the only one keeping everyone centered while everyone was struggling. Kim Ye-Ri seemed bored because she was spending time with Park Lian and Alps. Yoo Ah-Young looked like she had practiced a lot, but she wasn't all that different from Park Deok-Gu.

Overall, the atmosphere was really serious.

Kim Hyun-Sung getting chided by the priests looked the most serious out of everyone else. He looked kind of excited and worried at the same time. He seemed more worried about meeting me rather than being scared of whether or not I was going to come.

It made sense, as he had stabbed me, after all.

I was sure he was still feeling guilty about that. He seemed to be thinking that I was going to blame him for it. Fortunately, he seemed to have realized that now wasn't the time to worry about things like that.

- Is this right?

- Yes, you're doing it right. It's almost time, so we should start heading out, Sunset Swordsman.

- Let me try it one more time.

- Sure…

- One more time…

- Okay.

- One more…

- We need to get going.

The sky turned slightly red, and that was when Kim Hyun-Sung left the temple quietly. The guild members looked incredibly nervous, even though they had never really felt nervous during expeditions. Everyone gathered was staring quietly at them, so it was understandable that they were nervous about all this.

Park Deok-Gu was waddling, obviously worried and nervous.

Jung Ha-Yan was biting her lips.

A priest from the Order of Benigoa was pouring holy water over Kim Hyun-Sung's head, and Kim Hyung-Sung lowered his head quietly. This was part of the preparation to welcome a god.

This was my first time seeing him look so serious. Although he had confidently stated that he was my soulmate, he seemed hesitant about moving forward. Clearly, he was worried that I was going to suddenly pop out and curse at him.

Eventually, he looked down and walked quietly. It felt like he had made the decision to keep moving forward and accept my cursing as I hurl them at him.

A worship song soon played, and the priests of the Blue Guild walked to the side, creating a path. Kim Hyun-Sung focused on his walking and moved as carefully as possible as he approached the statue.

Kim Hyung-Sung quietly looked up at the statue while praying.

Just then, the sunset illuminated the temple. The red light pervaded the temple, and a halo appeared on the statue. Everyone stared with bated breath, waiting for me to

appear.

'Ah, shit… What should I do? Should I go now?'

Nothing happened for a while, but no one seemed upset. They all seemed certain that I would appear and that I would definitely appear if they waited just a bit longer.

Meanwhile, I heard Jo Hye-Jin's whispers.

"Maybe…"

"Yes, Miss Jo Hye-Jin?" Alps asked.

"Maybe… it's me… and not the guild master," Jo Hye-Jin answered.

'…'

"I think it's me. What should I do…" Jo Hye-Jin whispered to Alps while sweating profusely.

CHAPTER 780
THE LAST (13)

'Shit, that's right. I'm thankful for that. Yes, we're partners. It's great you haven't forgotten.'

I was thankful that Jo Hye-Jin reacted that way. I knew she enjoyed spending time with me, but I never knew she thought of me that way.

'We're best friends.'

However, I couldn't actually smile. Her reaction was amusing in my eyes, but I broke out into a cold sweat. Actually, I was sure I was feeling worse than Jo Hye-Jin.

'Why are you reacting this way when Ha-Yan is staying quiet?'

I thought Jung Ha-Yan would claim that she was my soulmate, but she was really calm.

Since the divine message was sent while Park Deok-Gu and Jung Ha-Yan were there, they probably knew that I wasn't referring to any of them. Jung Ha-Yan would usually throw a tantrum about it, so her behavior right now showed me how much she had matured.

'Learn from Ha-Yan… '

Actually, Jung Ha-Yan seemed kind of interested, but she seemed to have lost all interest after it was revealed that Kim Hyun-Sung was my soulmate. She agreed to some extent that Kim Hyun-Sung was my soulmate, but I never imagined they'd make a bigger fuss than her.

"*Ah*, what should I do…"

Jo Hye-Jin looked around anxiously because nothing was happening.

Kim Hyun-Sung looking up at the statue still looked confident.

'Shit… '

Jo Hye-Jin quietly and slowly approached the statue. She was probably thinking that the statue would show some kind of reaction once she was close enough to it. However, she didn't have the courage to approach Kim Hyun-Sung and say, "I think it's me, not you, Guild Master."

Actually, no one would have the courage to say something like that. It would be inappropriate to do something unexpected during a serious religious event. Jo Hye-jin didn't want Kim Hyun-Sung, who firmly believed that he was my soulmate, to feel betrayed.

Moreover, she had never really been the type of person that would want to be in the limelight.

The statue wasn't showing any reaction, so the priests prayed even harder. They sang louder, and the festival awaiting my descent became lively once again. It was sunset, so the color of the sky was changing; they seemed confident that I was going to show myself before the sun vanished.

"I really can't go down there…" I mumbled.

The mood changed a few minutes later. Nothing was happening, so the disappointed crowd started murmuring to each other. Some were sad, while the visiting priests whispered to each other with a serious look. The guild members were still in line, but Jo Hye-Jin was farther out and was right in front of the statue.

Kim Hyun-Sung still seemed confident about my descent.

- Mr. Ki-Young… if you can hear my voice…

'I do hear your voice.'

- Please answer.

'It's kind of hard to answer.'

He grabbed his rosario tightly again and prayed. His prayer was a mix of complex emotions, and he was so passionate about it that it pushed aside the prayers of the crowd at the very front.

- There’s something I really want to tell you. Please…

A few moments later, the group of priests held a meeting. I was sure they were discussing how they should handle the aftermath since they had made such a big deal out of it.

That was when Jo Hye-Jin stood up and walked toward the group of priests.

- The Sunset Swordsman may not be the soulmate the divine message was referring to. What should we do…

- Have you delivered the news to Father Basel?

- Yes, but all he said was that he was going to come no matter what… he seemed certain of it. I’m not saying he’s wrong, but shouldn’t we come up with a different plan just in case he doesn’t descend? We must find a way to comfort the disappointed believers. Even I don’t think the Sunset Swordsman is the soulmate he had mentioned in His divine message…

- I’m sure it’s him. I think there's something else going on here. A god's descent is rare, much less a consecutive descent. He probably needs more time, or perhaps we need to offer some kind of tribute. It’s a rare example, but I heard the Elves offer a tribute to Elune.

- Mr. Lee Ki-Young wasn't a greedy man, so it would be absurd to offer a tribute to him when he had never been a materialistic man when he was still alive. Watch what you say, Father Verinome! I’m sure it’ll make him angry! Offering a tribute to the son of Benigoa?! Absurd!

- I-I’m sorry. That’s not what I meant…

And that was when Jo Hye-Jin spoke to the priests.

- I don’t think that’s necessarily the case.

- What do you…

- Obviously, I’m not saying that the sub guild master was a greedy man. He enjoyed helping others rather than doing things that benefited him, but… from what I remember, he had a simple hobby of collecting bags. However, he only collected the

same brand of bags, and he even had a display cabinet for them.

- *Haha*… I didn't know…

- The guild master was aware of that as well, and I recall him giving bags to him. Maybe…

- L-Looks like there's still a lot we don't know about him. *Ha… haha…*

-…

- Maybe he wanted to carry something in it. He probably wanted to store people's faith and love. It really is a simple hobby, and I'm starting to feel strange. I mean… he was human, too. It's obvious if you think about it. He protected the continent by himself and carried all the burdens. I'm sure he needed something to shake off the heavy pressure in his heart and mind. A-And it was something… as simple as collecting bags… I think I'm going to cry, Father Verinome.

-…

- I can't believe collecting bags was the one thing that comforted Mr. Lee Ki-Young while he was still alive… Such a simple hobby was his only escape and comfort… Just thinking about it is making me cry.

'Priests sure are scary. Wow… '

I had no idea how they came to the conclusion that I collected bags to store the people's faith and love.

'I need to be careful what I say and how I act, damn it.'

The soulmate remark had created this problem. It was ridiculous how the priests were praying with sincerity while crying, and I thought I knew what Jo Hye-Jin was going to do.

- I remember the guild master obtaining the same type of bag recently.

'Shit, he bought another one? Are you out of your mind, Kim Hyun-Sung?'

- *Ah!* Then we can offer that to him.

- That’s right. I actually wanted to get your opinion about using that as an offering.

- We should definitely offer it to him.

- I’ll notify the guild master myself.

- Thank you, Miss Jo Hye-Jin.

“This is driving me crazy. Shit,” I cursed.

Jo Hye-Jin didn’t seem to have the courage to tell them that she was my soulmate. In the end, she decided to stay beside Kim Hyun-Sung while pretending to deliver the offering because she thought I’d react if she were a little bit closer to the statue.

‘I’m going crazy.’

It wasn’t a bad plan, but I didn’t want to become a god who accepted bags as offerings.

It seemed Jo Hye-Jin had thought it through because she covered the offering with a white cloth. Upon seeing her approach, Kim Hyun-Sung's face brightened. He looked like he realized what was missing and was questioning how he could have forgotten it.

‘Did I really give off that kind of vibe?’

- There’s something I’d like to give you, Mr. Ki-Young.

‘Don’t give it to me… Don’t do it, damn it.’

I couldn’t descend, but even if I could, I wouldn’t descend just to accept a bag.

It felt like the guild members had come up with a plan to screw me over.

Jo Hye-Jin walked carefully as if she was carrying something very sacred and the onlookers whispered saying that it was probably a gift of gratitude to god.

However, a smart god wouldn’t want to appear right now.

There was one problem that I wasn’t expecting, and it was the fact that Han Sora was

trembling like an aspen tree.

'Ah… Ha-Yan! Shit… ah… '

Jung Ha-Yan had a hunch that Kim Hyun-Sung was probably not my soulmate.

'Ah… It's not her. Ah… '

If it wasn't her, Park Deok-Gu, or Kim Hyun-Sung, then who could it be? I wondered if she was thinking that there could be another third party unknown to her. She might actually be recalling the Park Mijin incident because her face had turned serious.

Han Sora turned pale upon sensing danger. She knew all too well that Jung Ha-Yan would eventually explode at this rate.

Jo Hye-Jin finally handed the offering over to Kim Hyun-Sung, and everyone looked at the statue with anticipation. Jo Hye-Jin believed that I would show myself now that she was here, while Kim Hyun-Sung believed that I would show myself now that the bag was here. He raised the offering high like the monkey that raised *that* cub.

Jung Ha-Yan started gnashing her teeth.

The people sang the hymn as loudly as they could, the sun began to set, and the priests were cheering. The priests had set the mood, and the Park-Ki-Ri siblings were clapping for some reason. They were the worst.

I had yet to appear, but Elena was crying for some reason.

'Why the hell are you crying?'

I felt like they were pushing me into a corner, and this situation was harder for me to deal with than the fight against those pigeons.

I looked to the side and saw Benigoa laughing, looking like she was enjoying all this.

'When did she get here?'

She was definitely mocking me.

'Shit… '

“I told you it’s not easy. Managing a continent is difficult, Lee Ki-Young. Your every word is really important. *Geez*… I don’t talk often because I’m afraid that I’m going to make a mistake. Don’t be too disappointed. Most rookies are like you,” Benigoa said.

‘…’

“O-Of course I thought you would be kind of different, but I guess you’re still a rookie—still a baby. *Hahaha.* I should teach you all I know and lead you on the right path. Relax, Lee Ki-Young. They say that you learn from your mistakes, right?” Benigoa asked.

I had no idea what to say. I looked down and saw that the situation down below was getting more and more interesting.

I felt like I was running out of options, so I bet my lips.

- It’s Mr. Lee Ki-Young…

- Mr. Lee Ki-Young has descended!

- He really descended!

- *Wooooooooooow!!!*

- It’s the son of Benigoa!

- Oh God, please watch over us always.

- Oh God! I’ll pray for you… the one who sacrificed himself for the peace of the continent! I'll pray for you for the rest of my life.

- We’ll never forget your sacrifice.

“…”

- Mr. Ki-Young?

“…”

- Mr. Ki-Young…

Kim Hyun-Sung was crying, and I started getting worried about what I could say to undo the damage.

CHAPTER 781
THE LAST (14)

It had been a while since I felt my mind going blank, and I was as shocked as when I discovered that my memories had been erased.

I wasn't afraid nor burdened by the believers' cheers.

I honestly had no idea how to explain this feeling.

Anyway, the entire situation was shocking to me.

This wasn't part of the plan, after all.

I really wanted to applaud the guild members for driving me this far into a corner, and I couldn't help but seriously think about how it was even possible for everyone to screw over an innocent person.

'I would've appeared earlier if I knew this was going to happen.'

I had no plans of becoming a shameful god who had descended upon receiving a bag as an offering.

I looked around and saw many people crying.

Some of them were cheering, but seeing the true face of the saint, who had sacrificed everything he had for the continent, made the crowd cry. I could feel holy power filling me up as their prayers poured in

'Shit. What's with the people praying for the success of Rift Land and asking to get accepted into an adventurer university? Is that all they can pray about when the saint of the continent has appeared before them? Well, at least they're being pragmatic.'

Obviously, the guild members' prayers were the most passionate.

Jo Hye-Jin was standing still while crying, and she kept moving her mouth as if there

were many things she wanted to say, but she didn't know how to say them.

Elena lowered her head at my sudden descent and couldn't look at the statue properly.

She probably thought that the act of making eye contact with a god was sinful. Yoo Ah-Young and Lee Chang-Ryeol were rubbing their eyes in disbelief.

Lee Chang-Ryeol rarely showed his emotions, so this was my first time seeing such a reaction from him.

Jung Ha-Yan and Park Deok-Gu had a similar reaction as the last time they witnessed this miracle.

Meanwhile, Oscar gathered her hands and prayed.

Alps showed respect more than anyone else. Most of the people got on their knees and started singing the hymn.

'The statue looks holy even in my eyes. It has a good effect since it's a Mythic-rank statue.'

"…"

'It would've been better if I went down before getting the bag… '

The two eyes made out of Gem of the Sun and Fairy Lake Pebbles emitted a soft light.

The way the sunset descended upon the statue made the statue look even better. I was sure everyone felt a sense of awe as holy power surrounded them, but the environment was helping as well, which made the effect even better.

I encountered a small issue, and it was the fact that I had no idea what to say.

I didn't know what to say to Kim Hyun-Sung, who was crying on the ground. Of course, there were things I wanted to say to him, but they were things I had to say to him privately.

What was I supposed to say in an official setting like this where many believers were watching? The people might get disappointed if I simply chit-chatted with him. The

believers of Lindel might find it strange as well.

I couldn't just say, *"How have you been, Mr. Hyun-Sung?"*

'This is driving me insane. Shit.'

- Mr. Ki-Young… can you see me?

"…"

- I… really… So… I…

Kim Hyun-Sung was choking up, and he couldn't speak properly.

I could tell that he couldn't control his emotions at all.

For now, I smiled warmly, but I didn't know what to say, and Kim Hyun-Sung definitely felt the same way. I understood why he was so confused. After all, he had stabbed me. I decided to greet him first.

"It's been a while, Sunset Swordsman."

- Mr. Ki-Young…

Kim Hyun-Sung looked disappointed for a moment by my formal tone of voice, but he probably realized that he didn't deserve to be disappointed because he nodded slowly in response.

- It's been a while, Mr. Ki-Young.

"…"

- There are many things I want to say to you. I wanted to tell you so many things once I see you again, but now that you're here in front of me. I don't even know how to start. I was really curious about how you've been and what you've been up to, but I know better than anyone that I don't deserve to ask those questions. However…

"…"

- However…

Kim Hyun-Sung nodded. I was sure he had to muster a ton of courage just to say such words.

- Have you been doing well?

I was sure he wanted to ask that question the most, and it was kind of a difficult question for me to answer. Normally, I would have nodded at that question, but I had to think twice if this conversation was even appropriate.

There was a reason why I called our Hyun-Sung "the Sunset Swordsman."

I was about to say something, but he beat me to the chase. I wanted to say something since I had descended, but he kept speaking over me in a method I considered to be quite dirty.

- I'm sorry.

"…"

- *Heuk… heuuuk…* I-I'm… sorry. There were so many things I wanted to tell you… I'm sorry. I'm really… really sorry. I wanted to see you again. I knew you were watching over me, and I want to tell you myself.

"…"

- I know saying this won't wash away the sin I had committed…

'He's not in his right mind.'

- I know it's just a selfish act of mine to get rid of the burden in my heart, even a little, but…

Kim Hyun-Sung was dumber than I thought.

- The sin I committed—

"Stop," I said.

-…

“Stop,” I repeated.

‘Does he have a death wish or something?’

He looked like he was going to use this opportunity to confess about stabbing me. I knew he was slow-witted, but he was more slow-witted than I thought.

‘Do you want to get stoned?’

I heard murmurs. The people were getting curious about what kind of sin the Sunset Swordsman had committed. I was sure they had questions. It was also suspicious that Rafael didn’t show himself, and I was certain that they had yet to take care of all the issues that came up.

There were still people who were suspicious about how I died, and I was sure that many people had come up with their own conspiracy theories.

In this situation, Kim Hyun-Sung's confession would be basically suicide.

The Blue Guild might even kick him out.

‘Don’t say that.’

“No one here has committed a serious sin that needs any confession. You’re a warrior who saved the continent and the guardian of the continent. You've protected the radiant sunset; you're not a sinner. Everything was predetermined and inevitable,” I told him.

- But…

“Don’t cry, Sunset Swordsman. Don’t cry for those who sacrificed themselves. Don’t waste the sacrifice of the wounded heroes. Although I couldn't stand in the same place as them, they’re sitting on the right side of Goddess Benigoa and are watching over the continent they've protected with their own hands,” I continued.

- Oh God…

- *Ahh…* Goddess Benigoa. *Ahhhh…* Father Lee Ki-Young…!

“They’re with me, and they are proud that they had protected their family, friends,

comrades, and lovers," I added.

Obviously, I didn't know where those dead soldiers were right now, but I didn't need to tell them that. It was just a white lie, but I was sure they were all living happily in heaven.

"Your job is to move on, not mourn the dead. You must let go of the affection and guilt you have right now," I instructed.

'You know you shouldn't actually let them go, right?'

- But…

"Let them go," I repeated.

- I can't… let go. *Heuk…* There's no way I would be able to let go.

'That's a good attitude. That's what I'm talking about.'

Of course, I couldn't allow him to let go of his guilt, as that would be my weapon.

"Let go. You can move on. No, all of you can move on. You all deserve happiness," I told them.

I said it without thinking, but it affected Jo Hye-Jin as well.

Jo Hye-Jin had been feeling somewhat guilty, after all, so my words somewhat comforted her. She collapsed to the ground and started crying. She was crying so much that she couldn't hold herself up and in the end, Alps came up and helped her.

- Mr. Ki-Young…! I-I…

"Don't be satisfied with this. Looking back or not moving on isn't the right thing to do. Acknowledging your sins is the right thing to do, but don't let that sin hold you back. It's okay to be sad, but don't fall so deeply into that sadness that you no longer notice your surroundings. The tiny lights that you cherish are shining down on the future before your eyes," I explained.

'It's okay to dwell on your sin a little. It doesn't matter if you don't notice your surroundings because of your sadness, right? Just don't forget about it, okay?'

I was convinced that I no longer needed to worry about them.

I knew exactly what Kim Hyun-Sung was thinking right now just by looking at his face.

He didn't agree with what I was saying. I could tell he was resisting and was never going to listen to what I was saying. It was a good attitude, and I wanted to applaud him for it. I was worried he was going to show resistance here, but it seemed that he wouldn't kick up a fuss anytime soon.

“I’m always watching over all of you. I'm looking forward to seeing what kind of continent you’ll create and what kind of lives you’ll enjoy…” I said.

- We have to enjoy it together, Mr Ki-Young. *Heuk… heuk…*

“…”

- We have to enjoy it together. It’s you who should be enjoying it, not me. *Heuk…* You know better than anyone that I don’t deserve to live a happy life! Let go of me! Let go! I said let go, damn it!

‘He’s getting worked up, and it’s scaring me… Didn’t we talk about this last time?’

Kim Hyun-Sung had to have been holding it in for too long because he started screaming. The priests nearby didn’t know what to do with him. They were holding him back for now, but I knew that wasn’t going to calm him down. Kim Hyun-Sung seemed unaware of the trouble he was causing right now, or perhaps he didn’t care.

This was definitely not the kind of situation that he was expecting. He was probably thinking that I came to give him hope about getting revived or to deliver unexpected news, which was probably why he was happy earlier.

He was happy when I mentioned soulmate, but what really made him happy was the hope that there was a small possibility that I could be revived.

I was sure he didn’t want to hear me telling him to forget everything and move on.

- I’ll bring you back no matter what. I’m going to save your spot. *Heuk… heuuk…* I won’t let things end like this. No one wants this kind of ending. I’ll put everything on the line and bring you back. The Blue Guild will do that.

‘That’s a good attitude.’

However, this wasn’t the right place to say that…

- We’re going to bring you back no matter what, Mr. Ki-Young. It doesn’t matter what we have to do. We’ll put everything on the line…

I thought it'd be best if I ignored him.

It wouldn't be enough, but there was a reason I came here.

“I… forgive your sorrows and sins,” I said

A massive ball of light descended upon everyone. Obviously, I wasn’t actually forgiving their sins, but I had to show some visual effect to make my descent worthwhile for me.

As expected, the believers lowered their heads and accepted the ball of light. Kim Hyun-Sung spread his sunset wings so that the ball of light wouldn't touch him. He blocked the light that continued falling until I disappeared.

-…

-…

- Who are you to forgive our sorrow and sins? Move on? Don’t make me laugh. You can forgive them all you want. I’m going to kill everything—until I go back to the very beginning. I’ll shred everything to pieces and kill everything until there isn’t a single ant left. I'll kill…

I saw Lee Ji-Hye looking down at Lindel with other masked people.

-… Everything.

CHAPTER 782
THE LAST (15)

- I'm going to kill everything.

"…"

'What's wrong with her… '

"…"

'She's joking, right? There's no need to go this far. You're scaring me.'

It was such a ridiculous sight.

'Why did she appear here all of a sudden?'

I desperately wanted Lee Ji-Hye to come, but I didn't want her to come here looking like that. I didn't want her to appear as the final villain. There were others with her, and the people who stood out the most were Kasugano Yuno and Sun Hee-Young.

Obviously, they looked different from before. This was my first time seeing Sun Hee-Young make that kind of face, and she looked like the past life version of herself. Of course, it was difficult to tell them apart from afar.

There were other people with her.

I knew Ha Yeon-Soo, who was next to Lee Ji-Hye, would be there because she was someone Lee Ji-Hye would always take with her wherever she went.

What kind of surprised me was that I saw unfamiliar faces.

Actually, I definitely saw them before.

"Where?"

I didn’t have to question it for long because I eventually nodded.

‘The Murder Brigade of our past lives.’

The twins standing in the background were members of the Murder Brigade of our past lives. It was the same for the man next to them. However, he had both legs rather than just one, and I remembered seeing him through Kasugano Yuno.

Out of the people I saw at the time, the only one I didn’t see was the tall and skinny man who gave off the most unpleasant aura. If I had seen him and Jung Jin-Ho outright, I would have immediately thought that I was looking at the Murder Brigade of our past lives.

I had no idea how Lee Ji-Hye got in contact with those three, but…

‘It’s not that surprising.’

They were a small group, but they managed to drive the continent to the brink of destruction. With that in mind, they were undoubtedly skilled. Kasugano Yuno could’ve given Lee Ji-Hye the information she needed to contact them, or Lee Ji-Hye had probably saved them, as they were working in the shadows.

The current timeline was so different from the previous one, so their nature had to have changed as well.

Ah! They probably got rid of the tall and skinny one because they believed that rehabilitation wasn’t going to work on him. I was sure he was similar to that bastard, Jung Jin-Ho. He was a typical scum that made people believe humans were born to be evil.

‘I don’t see Rafael.’

I thought he would be with Lee Ji-Hye, but it didn't seem to be the case.

Perhaps he just wasn’t here…

Anyway, the important part was that Lee Ji-Hye didn’t look so good. It seemed that she had truly fallen into the dark side, as this was my first time seeing such a grim expression on her.

‘Can’t she read the room? The situation is pretty obvious. Can she not understand what’s going on?’

'Obviously, I’m not someone who forgives the sorrow and sins of others. I’m not someone who will die for no reason. You should know that better than anyone. You actually didn’t believe I meant what I said, right? Right?

'You really thought I was going to sacrifice myself? I mean, it’s true that I did, but… I’m sure Kasugano said a lot of things as well, such as deciding that I was going to sacrifice myself or accepting my fate, but still… '

‘You should at least know that… ’

I didn't actually mean the words that I had been saying through the statue. There was a high chance that Lee Ji-Hye knew everything that was happening. She got into a contract with Lonovera, after all, so she definitely knew what was happening up here.

‘I know that you know everything. You’re just trying to scare me… You’re just taking it out on me because you’re angry. Anyway, you should go ahead and think about why I was asking for you… ’

It was highly likely that I was right.

There was a problem up here, so she'd most likely attempt to help me from down there. Of course, she could also be trying to screw me over, as I had carried out my plan without telling her the details. I really hope that my former assumption was right.

It had to be right.

- Are you okay, unni?

-…

- What should we do?

However, if Lee Ji-Hye was actually thinking about returning the continent to its previous condition…

“What should I do?” I questioned.

- Should we start?

“Start what? Don’t start anything,” I said.

Could Kim Hyun-Sung handle Lee Ji-Hye, who was going to go berserk? I pondered for a moment, but I shook my head. I didn't think he could take on Ji-Hye noona by himself in his current state. To put it bluntly…

‘She’ll beat his ass.’

Despite the fact that I had high expectations for our lovely regressor, he wouldn’t be able to handle her. In fact, she didn’t even need the brigade. They were nothing more than tools protecting her and helping her execute her plan a little faster.

If she were given a little more time, she would be able to carry out her plan without the brigade. What would happen if Lee Ji-Hye really did cause chaos on the continent? This situation was probably part of her script.

‘She’ll probably tell everyone that Kim Hyun-Sung had stabbed me.’

It wouldn't be easy to reveal the truth through Benigoa Net or the Goddess’ Mirror since Max was controlling those, but I was sure she’d do whatever it would take to tell people that Kim Hyun-Sung had stabbed me.

She would ruin the relationship that Kim Hyun-Sung had with the Blue Guild, and she might completely alienate him from everyone else.

If she got lucky, she might even make Jung Ha-Yan and Kim Hyun-Sung fight each other. Alienating him from the continent was her first task and seeing how she appeared just now made me think that her first plan wasn’t a difficult one.

- I’ll bring you back no matter what… Please answer me, Mr. Ki-Young. Answer me!

- Sunset Swordsman.

- Guild Master…

- Shit… shit… *Heuk…* Please answer me. Please… tell me there’s hope… that there’s a

way.

He was still talking about that?

Kim Hyun-Sung was probably thinking that he was in the midst of the biggest crisis of his life because he was shouting at the inactive statue.

I knew he had been backstabbed many times before, even though he was in normal condition. However, his current tumultuous state made it easy for anyone to backstab him. The Blue Guild had many problems, including financial issues, and I was sure they could only do so much to shield him.

In the end, internal strife would arise.

The Order of Benigoa and the Order of Lee Ki-Young might cause conflict, and there could be conflict between nations. The current situation was chaotic, and there were many things Lee Ji-Hye could do, which was probably why she was feeling desperate.

'If your intention was to make me realize just how shitty it is to be left in the dark, you've already succeeded, so stop. I'm really getting worried, noona.'

- Unni?

-…

- Unni…

'Why are you crying? Don't cry.'

- Fuckin' bastard.

'Her acting skills are on a different level. No, is she even acting?'

- Fuckin' bastard.

'You already know everything, right?'

- I had no idea, oppa.

"…"

- I had no idea I'd ever get this angry or end up feeling this shitty. I honestly thought I could just forget about it, but it doesn't seem to be the case. I'm sure you feel the same way, right? You would do the same if you were in my shoes.

"…"

- You touched what's mine. You thought I would just stand by and not do anything? You really didn't think I'd just accept it and move on, right? You thought I would just move on and live a happy life now that everything is over?

"No, that's not…"

-…

"…"

- The price must be paid. I don't know what caused you to hold such a ridiculous event suddenly, but that's none of my business. I don't know what made you think you wanted this kind of ending, but that has nothing to do with me. There's only one thing that's important to me: the bastard who touched what's mine must pay the price.

"…"

- Listen carefully, my love.

"…"

- I dedicate this to you.

"…"

- I'm going to dedicate the screams of those corrupted bastards who don't appreciate the fact that this peace was achieved because of your sacrifice.

'I think they know that, noona.'

- I'm going to sing on top of the corpse of the bastard who stabbed you, and I'm going to dance with you on top of the ruined continent.

“Does she really not know?” I questioned.

Lee Ji-Hye turned back slowly, and I saw the brigade members slowly opening a path for her.

- That’s how we’ll start again from the beginning. We’ll probably meet again once everything has reverted to where we started, right?

“*Ah…* shit…” I mumbled.

- Sounds fun, don’t you agree?

Lee Ji-Hye spoke again as she put her mask on.

- I love you, Lee Ki-Young, my soulmate.

Her face was distorted underneath the mask, and she was clearly hiding the fact that she was crying.

- See you later.

Just like that, she disappeared into thin air.

I couldn’t see her with the Telescope, so Lonovera had to be helping her.

“Shiiit…”

I couldn’t help but sigh because I had no idea what she was planning.

Thinking that something unexpected might happen was making me feel suffocated. I also couldn’t quite understand why I had to worry about the fate of the continent that was going to collapse because of Ji-Hye noona.

I glanced to the side, and Benigoa looked really serious. It seemed that she had also noticed that something unusual was going to happen.

“W-What should we do, Lee Ki-Young?” Benigoa asked.

“I’m not sure either. I should try to contact her…” I replied.

“What if that woman runs rampant? Shouldn’t you try to stop her? You can do it, right? Right? I… I… don’t want to make any sacrifices, Lee Ki-Young. I’m not Altanus. There are many things I haven’t tried yet…” Benigoa rambled on.

“…”

“This isn’t the time for this. I-I should hurry and tell Elune to join us. W-We’re really lacking manpower. I’ll put the difficult issues on hold for a moment… and focus on getting Elune…” Benigoa said.

“You don’t need to do that, Benigoa. Nothing has been set in stone, but we should still make preparations,” I told her.

“What kind of preparations?” she asked.

“We’ll have to proceed with the plan no matter what happens,” I answered.

“What?”

“Whether it’s to help me or destroy the continent, she’ll end up causing trouble,” I continued.

“*Ah…*”

“We have to be ready to handle whatever issue comes up. If it’s the former, I have to make preparations to go down there,” I said.

I honestly wasn’t sure what was going on, but I was sure of one thing: she was going to bring me back, and we’d probably meet again. After all, she did say, “See you later.”

CHAPTER 783
THE LAST (16)

“We’re not the only ones that need to prepare,” Belial said.

“…”

“The humans must also make preparations,” Belial added.

I saw Belial touching a cube. The cube was floating in the air, and the way it was moving on its own made it hard for me to keep my eyes off of it.

“You mean…”

“You said it yourself. The human who got into a contract with Lonovera is trying to put everything back to the way it was in the beginning,” Belial answered.

“…”

“That’s what I meant when I said they need to prepare as well. Lonovera was part of the 27th Legion, but that was all in the past. She already has her own army, and she may be stronger than I was before.

"In addition, she seems to have taken a liking to the human she got into a contract with, just like how I liked you. I’m sure their contract terms weren't that complicated,” Belial explained.

“*Hm…*”

“I don’t think it’s impossible. The humans were victorious in their battle with those flies, but that was only because they fought with swords. If it were up to me, I would’ve gone about it differently,” Belial continued.

“…”

“If she really wanted to turn everything back to the beginning, there’s no reason to

win the war. There's nothing more entertaining than ruining your opponent without any reasons or conditions. You don't have to worry about reason as well as the loss and profit after the war," he added.

"I think I understand what you're saying," I said.

"You just need to destroy without thinking about the *how.* I'm sure it's not difficult for her or people like you. A gathering of humans with disgusting souls and malicious intent is scary. There's nothing scarier than that, and the humans need to be prepared for that.

"I don't want the continent to regress," Belial confessed.

"I-It's the same for me. Elune is still thinking about whether to come or not… It's a pretty big risk, don't you agree, Lee Ki-Young?" Benigoa asked.

"You're more devilish than a devil, Benigoa. How about switching careers?" Belial suggested.

"…"

"…"

"Anyway, if you want, I can try to get in contact, but… I can't guarantee it'll have a positive effect. What do you think?" Belial asked.

'Is it impossible to get in contact with Lonovera?'

"No, there's no need to get in contact just yet," I replied.

Lucifer really cherished Lonovera, so contacting her directly would be dangerous.

'I would cherish her as well.'

Who wouldn't cherish a talented demon like her who quickly became the commander of her own army from just a mere foot soldier? Anyone would cherish someone like that, so it wasn't strange that Lucifer cherished Lonovera.

I soon came up with a simple assumption. *'Is Lucifer behind this?'*

It was impossible for Lucifer to be directly involved, but I couldn't exclude the possibility of her being involved indirectly. Of course, this was solely based on the relationship between Lonovera and Lucifer, so it probably had nothing to do with Ji-Hye noona.

I honestly couldn't imagine her being used by Lucifer. I didn't know what Lucifer wanted in the current situation, but it was highly likely that they had the same goal. If the two had gotten in contact before, they might be preparing to backstab each other.

'Lee Ji-Hye might know the details of our bet. I don't think she was persuaded by Lucifer… '

I wondered when she was going to execute her plan. The time period was too short to say that it'd be a while before she executed her plan, but it wasn't *that* short that she couldn't slowly build up to the execution of her plan.

If she really was planning something, then it'd be enough time for her to get the basics down. It'd take at least six months, of course, so she was definitely going to do something monumental.

'If I were asked if the continent was ready, I would say no… '

They were still too busy trying to take care of the aftermath of the war. Six months was too short for people to recover from their wounds, and most importantly, they weren't aware of the fact that there was a brand-new threat.

Jung Ha-Yan was at the magic tower with the gramps and was busy gathering holy power while being idolized by the rookie mages.

- I-I-I'm the god of magic. I-I mean… I think I became the god of magic.

- Miss Jung Ha-Yan?

- L-L-Listen closely! I'm the god of magic!

'That's not how it works.'

- You must pray. Y-You must pray to god. S-Sora is the angel of magic who stands beside the god of magic, understand?

- Miss Jung Ha-Yan… why are you suddenly…

- Do you understand?!

- Yes… *hahaha*. We understand, Miss Jung Ha-Yan.

- You must pray to me and S-Sora every time you use magic. F-Follow me for now. I-I'll show you what kind of magic the god of magic can use. *Ah*… before that, you must pray. Pray.

- *Ah*… how…

- I don't know either but pray. P-Pray with sincerity.

The gramps of the magic tower treated Jung Ha-Yan as if she were their granddaughter, so they did as they were told and prayed. However, Jung Ha-Yan's efforts weren't enough to help her gather enough holy power.

Of course, it would be a bit effective, but it wouldn't be enough for her to come up here. However, the slight effect made her happy because Jung Ha-Yan was smiling, but Han Sora had no idea what was happening.

- W-What do you think, Sora?

- *Ah*… I think…

- I-If you don't like being an angel of magic, do you want to be an angel of something else?

- I'll think about it.

Cha Hee-Ra was busy drinking, sleeping, drinking, and sleeping.

Those who had participated in the war thought that it was finally over, so they decided to take a long break.

Meanwhile, Kim Hyun-Sung spent most of his time in front of the statue.

He was probably hanging around because he was convinced that there was another way, but he couldn't think of another way. He had been pretty busy these days.

He had been pretty busy because he thought sculpting a statue and building a temple would help him find a way to bring me back. However, his assumption had been proven incorrect, so she was now feeling frustrated.

- I'm thinking about jumping into Mirror Lake, Mr. Ki-Young. I might be able to find a way to bring you back if I go into the dimensional wave.

"…"

It had become a habit of his to visit the statue early in the day or after work to talk to himself. I couldn't really describe it, but he was going through something mentally. If I hadn't been using the Regressor Instruction Manual to help him mentally, he would have crippled himself long ago.

"Lee Ki-Young, h-how about requesting help from the God of Sunset? You can explain the situation up here. It may be limited with your current skills, but you can use your voice to tell him that the continent is in danger and to bring you back… If you tell him that…" Benigoa suggested.

"That's a foolish thing to do. When you think about the disgusting and nauseating things he had done up until now, he doesn't have the right to say something like that. What is he going to say to him?" Belial interrupted.

'Yeah, he's right. It'd be strange to tell him that I want to be brought back at this point. I already said everything earlier, so it'll make me look suspicious. More importantly… '

Kim Hyun-Sung would exhaust himself, looking for a way to bring me back.

That was all he had been thinking from the very beginning, so I didn't want to say anything else to him. I didn't even know what was happening, and what I needed to do in order to return come back.

I knew my bet with Lucifer was a key factor, but I wasn't sure about everything else.

I wasn't sure if notifying Kim Hyun-Sung about the situation up here would benefit him or poison him. Actually, I was convinced that it'd be poisonous to him. He wasn't a third party. He was a key member and the subject of the bet. Giving Kim Hyun-Sung instructions could be considered manipulating the result of the game.

'I also don't know what kind of penalty will occur if I were to do that.'

There were also simple reasons that didn't need any explanation.

"T-Then should I deliver a divine message? I-I don't have much right now, but…" Benigoa offered.

'I'm not sure… '

Nothing was happening yet, so I had no idea where I should start or what I should say. Ji-Hye noona sounded so ambitious that I couldn't just end it by sending a divine message.

'Will they prepare if we send a divine message telling them to get ready?'

They couldn't possibly be prepared for what Lee Ji-Hye was going to do.

They'd agree if the divine message was about the Outer God invading and telling them to prepare themselves, but how would I explain to them that the threat was Lee Ji-Hye?

It wasn't the best example, but it was no different from telling them to prepare for a disease spreading internally. They could be careful, but they wouldn't know what kind of disease they were about to handle.

I was also sure they'd die before they were ready for it.

'How can I stop her?'

I needed to find a way to influence the continent.

'We need to stop the masked scum that's trying to get revenge.'

I knew I couldn't stop Lee Ji-Hye in my current state. If sending a few divine messages was considered intervening, then I wouldn't be able to stop her no matter what.

It was already hard dealing with her in the current state; it was like playing chess without the knight and pawn. If Ji-Hye noona were just an ordinary villain, then I wouldn't be as worried. However, she was the masked villain, so I was getting nervous.

While I was tapping my thighs, I heard Belial speak.

“That’s the point, isn’t it?”

“What?”

“Aren’t you saying you need to find a human who will be your hands and feet?” Belial asked.

“Well, something like that,” I answered.

‘Ji-Hye noona was supposed to be my hands and feet.’

“That’ll make things easier,” Belial commented.

‘How will that make things easier?’

“We’ll have to make a small investment, but this will be better than dealing with the issue if something untoward were to happen,” Belial said.

“W-What did you have in mind?”

Benigoa and Belial made eye contact. At first, Benigoa looked at Belial as if she didn’t know anything, but she eventually nodded and smiled brightly. “*Ah…* You’re right! *That’s* a good idea."

‘What is it? Why are you two enjoying this? I want to enjoy it, too.’

“Please tell me,” I requested.

“You still have a long way to go, Lee Ki-Young. You still don’t know the basics…” Benigoa said.

‘You didn’t know it until just now.’

“Think about how we can influence humans,” she said.

“Quests? Divine messages?” I asked.

“That’s right. It’s too difficult to send quests right now in this space… and sending a

divine message or descending is hard to do constantly. It's also not profitable… Those two methods are the answer, but that's not the answer I'm looking for. How can we continuously take care of the continent? Think again, Lee Ki-Young," Belial explained.

Belial definitely wanted to act like my senior, as he was acting in a dignified manner, but unfortunately, I couldn't figure out his riddle.

When I looked at Belial as if urging him to tell me the answer, Benigoa hurriedly shouted, "I'll tell you!"

"…"

"Warrior!" Benigoa said.

"*Ah…*"

"Prepare a holy sword. We'll pick someone to become your representative—a god's chosen one," Benigoa added.

Just then, I saw someone approaching the statue.

"…"

"…"

"Looks like it'll be a holy spear for me," I told them.

- Have you been doing well, Sub Guild Master? I mean…

"…"

- Ki-Young.

Jo Hye-Jin spoke quietly.

CHAPTER 784
THE LAST (17)

The temple was open for everyone, so many people would visit it everyday. There were so many visitors that Lindel was always full of tourists. Unfortunately, only a limited number of people were allowed inside. Of course, it wasn't like we couldn't keep up with the demand. In fact, that wasn't the issue at all.

There were twenty-four hours a day, and the temple was only open for three hours to the public. They had publicly announced that they'd increase the business hours to five hours during holidays and weekends, but the temple was never open to the public for more than three hours.

In addition to the limited number of people who could see the status, they had to go through a very rigorous procedure as well. It was so difficult to get into the Lindel temple that people were saying that it was a lot harder than getting a visa to enter another country.

It became common for believers—who traveled from far away to see the statue—to return home without seeing the statue. There were even times when the guild members refused to open the temple, believing that the followers were interfering with my work.

Actually, it was more like they were the ones interfering with me.

'It's kind of unfair to use twenty-one hours all to yourselves.'

Kim Hyun-Sung and Jung Ha-Yan had the highest shares, so they visited the temple as if they were living there, so I didn't need to explain anything about them.

It was the same for Park Deok-Gu.

They even established a time when only guild members and key members related to the Blue Guild could visit the temple.

'Now that I think about it, they're pretty dirty. Actually, they're rotten.'

It would be great if they decided to open the temple of Lindel to the public for more than just three hours.

Anyway, Jo Hye-Jin, the person standing before the statue, had a pretty high share as well. She didn't visit me every day, but she would visit the temple oftentimes. She'd also spend a lot of time here during her visits.

- I was kind of busy today.

'I'm sure you were. I'm sure no one is actually doing their work right now. How's Miss Kim Mi-Young? She didn't pass out from overworking, did she? Actually, you're not going to pass out from overworking, right?'

I was sure that wouldn't happen considering her health.

- The guild's financial situation is pretty bad. I don't know why we spent so much money. We didn't even have enough funds to build the temple. Maybe we need to start charging an entrance fee. What do you think? I'm sure you'd agree to it if you were here…

'No. I think charging an entry fee is a bit too much. It might be better if you accept donations or offerings.'

- Anyway, I'm starting to get used to the fact that you're not here, but I sometimes feel empty… I'm sure the others feel the same way. I honestly thought I would continue feeling the emotions I felt before, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

'Really?'

- I miss going out to have a drink and playing chess with you. I'd end up lying in bed and just thinking to myself: what I would be doing right now if it weren't for you? At the very least the guild won't be in such dire financial straits if you were here.

'Of course not.'

- If it hadn't been for the donations, we would have been in really big trouble. Have you heard of the Friendship Guild?

'They donated? Shit, what a rare sight. This is why people should be nice to others. Have I told you about the Friendship Guild before? I've helped them before, and I've

finally gotten a return on my investment.'

- Anyway, that's what's happening right now. There is news of people discovering dungeons nearby lately, so I've been preparing for expeditions. It's still too early for me to move on, but I think an easy expedition will help us a little. The guild master doesn't seem all that interested, so there's not much I can do about that. I'm sure Hyun-Sung is suffering the most…

'Look at her calling him "Hyung-Sung" so casually.'

Technically, Jo Hye-Jin was older than Kim Hyun-Sung. Of course, Kim Hyun-Sung seemed older than her because he was a regressor, but in my eyes, Jo Hye-Jin was more mature than him.

However, they'd experience mental breakdowns more than mental growths in their previous life.

Every time Jo Hye-Jin stood in front of the statue and started talking to herself, I would always think that perhaps she was getting too comfortable.

It was a good thing for me, but she was probably thinking that I wasn't listening to her or that I'd matured a little. Otherwise, she probably thought that I had changed completely. She considered this place as a safe haven, and she was no different from other people who were visiting my statue.

I was sure that she truly considered this temple as her safe haven.

As I saw earlier, Kim Hyun-Sung was still the same.

Park Deok-Gu and Elena spent a lot of time here, but no one was influenced positively like Jo Hye-Jin.

'She's improved a lot.'

Jo Hye-Jin had become completely different compared to when she looked like a mess.

It seemed like her personal issue had been resolved. Of course, Alps played a big part since she was constantly taking care of her. However, my statue was what *really* affected her.

“What do I need to do to bestow her a holy spear, Benigoa? Do we even have spears?” I asked.

“I-I’m not sure…” Benigoa replied.

“*Ah*, don’t you have a spear, Benigoa?” I questioned.

“*Ah*… you mean mine?” Benigoa asked.

“Yes.”

“I-It wouldn’t be right to give her mine, and it’s more meaningful if you give her your own weapon. Information about my spear is still in the Order of Benigoa, so I’m sure my followers will notice. It’s not because I don’t want to lend it to you. It's just that… the procedure is complicated,” Benigoa explained.

“We need to find ways to save holy power. The bestowal of that holy sword was a huge mess, so if we bestow upon a holy spear…” I trailed off.

“I think it’s best if I think of it as an investment… *Ah!* I think it would be a good idea to find out if there’s an appropriate spear that’s on sale,” she suggested.

“Where will you look?” I asked.

“*Ah*, we do have a market here. We need a Mythic-rank spear, but we can’t present an expensive one. I think this is a reasonable price, but I’m not sure we’ll find one that meets the requirements.

"Still, I’m sure there’s a spear that no one wants here. Spears aren’t as popular as swords as well, as the managers of the other continents prefer swords over spears,” Benigoa replied.

“If it’s possible, please find a decent one,” I requested.

I would be bestowing it upon my friend, so I didn’t want to get a cost-effective one.

Even if it was way beyond our budget, I thought It'd best to give her a nice one.

“A-As of right now, this is the cheapest one,” Benigoa stuttered.

“The price is a bit…”

“We can’t get an expensive one. With our current funds… this is all we can afford. Of course, if you wait a few more years…” she said.

Unfortunately, we didn’t have time for that.

I looked at the spear hovering above Benigoa's palm, but it wasn’t good enough.

I even got curious about how the spear became a Mythic-rank spear. Aside from the fact that it’d never break, there was nothing special about it. Jo Hye-Jin would look good with it, but it was lacking.

“What should we do? S-Should we get it for now? If we register it under your name, the customization options will be limited. Of course, you can change the shape and add functions, but it’ll be really limited…” Benigoa asked.

“Let’s do that,” I told her.

There was a flash of light, and the weapon appeared in her hands. I thought there was going to be a delivery man, but they didn’t seem to have one. Honestly…

‘I don’t really know much.’

I thought I somewhat had an idea of what was happening up here, but it turned out that there were still many things unknown to me.

Anyway, I grabbed the spear and registered it under my name. Then, I started customizing it as I wished. Adding features was a bit difficult for me, so I wanted the spear to look good at the very least.

‘Ah, I don’t really like it… ’

“T-That looks nice. I-It looks really sacred,” Benigoa stuttered.

I didn't think that Jo Hye-Jin would like it. It could be a bit too much, but I thought it would be great to change the color of the spearhead to her favorite color.

“T-The color is a bit…”

“No, I think this is good,” I interrupted.

Meanwhile, Jo Hye-Jin sat next to the statue and continued talking to herself.

- It seems like things have improved, but it’s still… Anyway, I hope Hyun-Sung returns to his normal self… This might be just me being greedy since I have changed a lot as well. Honestly, I haven’t been playing chess these days. I've been too busy every day, so I don’t have time. I… also don’t have anyone to play it with, but more importantly, I keep thinking about you. I don’t know where Miss Ji-Hye is either…

'I’ll be really touched if you keep saying that.'

- *Ah!* Also, Hyun-Sung seems to be thinking that he’s your soulmate. Funny, right?

'My soulmate isn't among you guys.'

- I think I was kind of comforted by the words you spoke that day. Actually, your words comforted me a lot. It was also an opportunity for me to make up my mind… I’m not sure if you've actually forgiven our sorrow and sins, but I felt much more at ease. Really…

-…

“…”

Jo Hye-Jin went silent. She kept moving her lips as if there was something she wanted to tell me. Eventually, she sighed and looked up at the statue.

- You’re really coming back, right?

'Maybe?'

- I’m sure you heard, but Hyun-Sung said he’ll bring you back no matter what. He said it’s possible, and he's telling us every day that there’s a way, but… I’m not really sure. I don’t know if there really is a way or if he’s just holding onto a ridiculous ray of hope… But I really want you to come back.

'I want to return as well, Hye-Jin.'

- H-Honestly, I’m still struggling a lot… *Heuk… heuuk…* It’s really… hard… I thought it

was going to get better, but that doesn't seem to be the case. I thought I would get over it over time, but I don't think that's going to happen. I feel like one part of my heart is empty. The fact that I no longer have anyone to talk to or talk about my feelings with makes things really difficult for me. I've lost a lot of people, but your existence must've affected me more than I thought. I thought you were just an annoying prick…

'Hold on… '

- I thought you were just a scummy bastard… and that I would never be friends with you… *Heuk… heuuuk…*

'That's a bit harsh.'

- I thought you were a bastard… and a really disgusting worm, but…

'That's enough.'

- *Heuk… heuuk…*

'Actually, you can keep going.'

I was human as well, so my heart broke upon seeing her let out a wordless cry. She was crying and wasn't even looking at the statue properly.

Her cries filled the temple, and I didn't think it would be a good idea to leave her like that, so I got ready to bestow upon her the spear I had prepared for her. It seemed like she hadn't noticed it yet, but the statue was shining brightly.

Eventually, she felt something strange and looked up slowly with curiosity written all over her face.

- *Uh…*

That was all she said. Then, he hurriedly took out her hand mirror to call someone, but she suddenly froze and looked up quietly. She knew there was something I wanted to say to her, and she probably didn't want to complicate things as well.

- Sub Guild Master?

A massive column of light descended.

Boom!

A deafening noise echoed, and the spear with a blue spearhead pierced the ground.

Jo Hye-Jin covered her face because of the cloud of dust, but I was sure her eyes were looking at the spear. She noticed the faint energy that the spear was emitting, and she stood frozen, seemingly dumbfounded.

Eventually, she approached the spear slowly as if she were possessed.

This situation was a story that was worth telling others, and if this story was passed down to future generations, her name would forever be remembered in history as the envoy chosen by god.

The ground was covered in light, and every time she took a step, the light would disappear. I wasn't sure if she liked the spear that I had customized for her, but she seemed satisfied with its appearance.

She reached out toward the spear while wiping her tears. And then…

"Are you crying?" I asked.

- *Heuk… heuuuk…*

"Are you crying right now?" I asked again.

- *Heuk… heuuuk… heuuuk…*

"Are you crying, Miss Hye-Jin?" I asked.

- I'm… I'm not… I'm not crying… *Heuk*… What are you saying?

"I think you are crying…" I teased.

- I'm not crying… *Heuk…* I'm not crying… I'm not crying…

CHAPTER 785
THE LAST (18)

Jo Hye-Jin calmed down a bit and started catching her breath.

She gripped the spear so tight that I thought it was going to break under her grip.

It wasn't like the spear was going to disappear if she let go of it, but she refused to loosen her grip on it, which was unlike her.

However, it was a very appropriate behavior for a god's chosen one, so I was happy about it. Of course, I couldn't show that at all, as I was getting a headache at the thought that I needed to explain the current situation.

I thought about handling the situation with a more business-like relationship, but we needed to work closely together, so I thought it would be best to give her a detailed explanation of my situation.

- *Whoo…*

Jo Hye-Jin breathed out again, and she smiled weakly. She seemed happier about hearing my voice than the fact that a spear had suddenly fallen from the sky and the fact that she had become my chosen one.

- Sub Guild Master… what's… going on?

"What do you mean? You were just chosen to represent me. I used an immense amount of light to bestow upon a spear to you, and you accepted it," I answered.

- You know that's not what I'm asking. Was this the reason why you were looking for me?

"Not really…" I replied.

'You're not my soulmate.'

- Have you been doing well? What situation are you exactly in right now? Have you really become a god? Can you really come back? What happened to that cheesy tone of voice you used when you were inside the statue? What are you doing right now?

'Why is she talking so fast?'

"I don't know why you have so many questions, but let's take it slow. I'm not going to run away. First of all, bring the chessboard that's in my room… It's the chessboard that Hyun-Sung gave to me as a gift. Wait, actually, never mind. There's no need to play with a statue anyway…" I said.

- How can you think about playing chess at a time like this? *Heuk…*

'Why are you crying?'

It seemed like she had misunderstood something. Jo Hye-Jin was probably thinking that I wanted to play a game of chess because she said that she no longer played chess.

'Ah, that's not what I meant.'

First of all, I was bored, and I just wanted our conversation to be a bit smoother going forward. I was sure she'd feel calmer if we talked while playing. We could think about the past and talk about the memories we had shared together. Wouldn't she want that?

- The guild master has the key to your room. I think it's best if we go to my room. Actually, this…

"Don't bother asking and keep this a secret for now. I'm sure people will find out, but I don't want them to make an official announcement or make the situation bigger than it needs to be… You don't want them to announce it to the entire continent, do you?" I asked.

- Honestly, it doesn't matter to me, but I think that's the best thing to do. More importantly, why have you suddenly bestowed this upon—

"Why do you think I chose you? I needed someone to represent me… *Ah*, let's hurry. I'll tell you everything you want to know," I suggested.

Jo Hye-Jin started walking as she bit her lips. She seemed kind of dissatisfied, and I was sure she was annoyed since she had many questions, yet I wasn't giving her any answers.

- Just so you know, I won't be able to hide this forever. People will start asking about the strange phenomenon just now, and they'll ask questions about the spear I'm holding.

"I know. Just tell them that I chose you and that you've become a representative of a god; they'll definitely understand. *Ah!* Let's come up with a story. Don't explain the details; just say that you got it as a gift. I think that's a good enough explanation," I suggested.

- I don't think it'll end there…

"That's something you need to work on, Miss Hye-Jin. Anyway, I really missed this. Don't you think so?" I asked.

Jo Hye-Jin nodded, seemingly in agreement with what I said.

I was sure she missed it, too.

We used to sit at this small table, and I remembered a chessboard would be sitting here most of the time. We would talk about various things while drinking a glass of wine, and we would sometimes play the game in silence.

There was nothing on the table right now, but Jo Hye-Jin soon took out a chessboard from the drawer, and it felt like we went back to the past.

- A glass of wine… *Ah*, I'm sorry.

"I can't drink it anymore, but I appreciate the thought. You should still put two glasses. I think it's best to set up the mood," I suggested.

- You're right… I think that'll be good.

Normally, it would be my job to place the glasses and pick out the wine, but since I couldn't really move, it was her responsibility now.

- What… should we drink…

It seemed that she had been drinking a lot lately, as there were empty bottles piled in the corner. She brought over a bottle of wine and poured it into the cups. She seemed to be enjoying it, and I thought I knew why Jo Hye-Jin was enjoying it. It was like she had gotten her life back. The crying Jo Hye-Jin was nowhere to be seen.

She was clearly excited about all this.

- This should do. You can't drink it anyway, but… Can you even move the pieces?

"That's a dumb question. Obviously, you need to help me move them. Don't move them elsewhere intentionally. Even if you lose, you have to accept your defeat and not be petty about it. Got it?" I said.

- That won't happen, so don't worry.

"Then, let's start. I'll move the pawn first. Let's see how much your skills have declined," I said.

- I can finally play with you again.

'Look at you.'

Jo Hye-Jin was focused on the game. I thought she'd be uncomfortable, as she had to move my pieces as well, but she was really focused to the point that she couldn't take her eyes off the board. She raised her glass once to clink with mine, but she laughed awkwardly upon realizing that I wasn't actually there with her.

"Just clink it," I told her.

She clinked her glass with the glass sitting on the opposite side of her.

- You've improved. Have you been playing there as well?

"Of course not. It's called skills. When you get to a certain level in this game, it turns into a game of skills," I replied.

- The way you talk has never really changed.

"*Hahaha*," I laughed.

- So…

“Yes?”

- Isn’t it time you answered my questions? So… what happened?

“Who knows… I actually don’t know where to start,” I replied.

- How did you die? Actually, are you even dead?

“You’re somewhat right. Physically, I am dead. My human form is definitely dead. *Ah*, you never heard how I died,” I said.

- I did, but…

“Hyun-Sung wasn't lying; he really did stab me. *Ah!* No need to be shocked. Hyun-Sung was confused at the time because he was under a mind-control spell. It's not like he stabbed me intentionally. Actually, I wanted to get stabbed as well. Haven't I told you?

"I must sacrifice myself so that the continent can win the war. I knew I was going to get stabbed by Hyun-Sung because that was one of the winning conditions. If you ask me how I knew that or how I was sure about it, it’ll make the story longer. Anyway, I knew that was going to happen to me,” I explained.

- That’s…

“It means it’s really been decided that the saint was going to sacrifice himself to save the continent. It’s because of my sacrifice that the continent managed to win. All I did was follow the manual. The problem is that…” I trailed off.

-…

“I didn’t know I’d end up in this kind of situation,” I continued.

- I don’t understand what you mean by *this kind of situation*.

“It’s basically the situation I’m in right now. I didn’t know I would end up being up there. There’s a reason why I made a choice that made me look like a fool. I thought I wasn’t going to die,” I said.

-…

“The only reason I had faith was because my plan was going swimmingly at the time. I was almost certain that I wasn’t going to die. Even before I lost my memories, I knew I wouldn’t harm myself,” I added.

- I still don’t understand what you're saying.

“I’m not certain, but I think I made a bet with a demon about whether or not Hyun-Sung was going to stab me,” I told her.

- What?

“If Hyun-Sung stabs me, I thought Lucifer would help when we fight the Outer God,” I said.

- What are you…

“Afterward, I realized something was strange. I realized it as I was dying. The sunset hero hadn't accepted Lucifer’s help; he rose up on his own and succeeded in driving out the strange sky. I couldn’t figure it out afterward.

"One thing I was sure of was that before losing my memory, I didn’t want her to interfere in the first place. My goal was to free the continent from that demon’s grasp as well as from any outside interference. However, I only realized it later on,” I explained.

- What?

“That’s why I have limited communication to the continent. Hyun-Sung’s attribute is still active, yes, but you're my only form of stable communication since you've become my chosen one today.

"Anyway, not only is it impossible to keep sending divine messages or keep descending into the statue, but it's also really burdensome to do,” I said.

Jo Hye-Jin looked out the window quietly. It seemed like she was at a loss for words. I could tell she was confused about what to say first. Honestly, I wasn’t sure if she understood everything I told her because even I didn’t fully understand the things I told her just now.

‘It looks like she understands.’

- Are you avoiding the possibility of coming into contact with the demon named Lucifer?

“Something like that,” I replied.

- The details of the bet could be that the guild master has to stab you and the reward for that could actually be your revival, not granting power to fight off the Outer God… There may inevitably come a situation where we’ll get help from Lucifer.

“You’re right. I thought of a slightly different possibility, but that it includes that reason as well,” I said.

- If we receive Lucifer’s help, does that mean she’ll be interfering with the continent?

“That’s right,” I answered.

- So you’re trying to find a way to come back on your own.

“Yes.”

- T-That method…

“I’m still searching for a way. One thing I’m sure of is that I can come back. I trust myself. It was my mistake that an unexpected situation happened, but I believe I included that mistake in my calculation.

"t has been confirmed that I’ll return, and I'm not going to receive Lucifer’s help either. I even wondered if this situation was what I intended before I lost my memories,” I told her.

- Really?

“There was an arrangement. I created a space to buy some time. I accepted it as telling myself to find a way to bring myself back and to get ready to screw Lucifer over. Of course, I can’t achieve this by myself. I need help from the people down here,” I continued.

- Is that why you gave me this spear?

“Yes, but there are other reasons. There’s something I need you to stop. I honestly didn’t know things would turn out this way as soon as the big war ended, but someone is planning on completely destroying the continent,” I informed her.

- What?

“It’s actually someone you know, Miss Hye-Jin,” I said.

-…

“Lee Ji-Hye,” I revealed.

- What…

“Have you heard of regression? She's thinking that she can turn everything back to the very beginning. I can’t really find her even from up there. Anyway, that’s the current situation. I’m suggesting that we work together and stop the things that are about to happen,” I told her.

- W-What are you saying? Miss Ji-Hye… is planning that? Wait… why is she suddenly…

Jo Hye-Jin was in disbelief.

‘Ah… ’

Jo Hye-Jin seemed really shocked, and she couldn’t quite grasp what I just told her. I was sure she never imagined that Lee Ji-Hye would even think of doing something like that.

- T-That… can’t be…

“If we don’t stop her, everything will collapse. Really. The situation is *that* serious,” I added.

- There’s no way Miss Ji-Hye is planning on doing something like that. Maybe you’re mistaken. She’s not the type of person who'd do something like that.

Yeah, I needed to give Jo Hye-Jin a reason to believe that what I was saying was true, as Ji-Hye noona had always been someone who cared about her image.

“I’m not certain, but…” I paused.

-…

“I think a demon is involved in her decision as well,” I added.

I wasn't wrong, nor I was lying to her.

CHAPTER 786
THE LAST (19)

- Sub Guild Master?

"…"

- If what you're saying is true, shouldn't we let the guild master know?

"…"

- Sub Guild Master. Sub Guild Master?

"Didn't we talk about that yesterday? Bringing that up so early in the morning…" I complained.

- *Ah*, I'm sorry. I'm sure you're tired…

"It's fine… you don't have to apologize," I told her.

I honestly wasn't that tired.

- I thought hard about our conversation yesterday. If what you're saying is true and a demon is truly taking advantage of Miss Ji-Hye and the continent is in danger again, then it's best if the guild handles it. It's a demon of all things.

"I don't want Hyun-Sung to know," I said.

-…

"…"

- Is there a reason why you don't want him to know?

"Is there a reason why he should know? Do you really want him to know? I think we should just let him do whatever he wants rather than upset him.

"Anyway, should hurry up and take care of our tasks instead of talking like this. We may not be able to handle the financial situation right now, but we should stop whatever we can. You said the guild is about to shut down as well," I suggested.

- It's true that I'm busy with guild duties, but in the current situation…

"I'm suggesting it because there's nothing we can do right now. I told you to think of this as a chessboard. Lee Ji-Hye is the white piece, and we're the black piece, which means that she can make the first move. It's best if we take care of whatever we can right now," I explained.

- Then… what should I report to the guild master? He'll find out eventually. If what you mentioned really happens…

"That's why I'm telling you not to worry about Hyun-Sung. Just get ready to tell people about my revival," I replied.

- The guild master will not sit idly by when he finds out.

Actually, I would send him somewhere far away where the news wouldn't reach him, so he was definitely going to sit idly by. Once the incident broke out, Kim Hyun-Sung would be too busy to handle the fake quest I would give him.

Of course, he'd be aware of the threat, but the threat wouldn't be as big as the recent threat.

We had to take care of the issue before it became out of control. I didn't think that there'd be a situation where Kim Hyun-Sung would interfere and cut off Lee Ji-Hye's head, but one could never speak in absolutes. The masked hero wasn't just one person, so I wasn't sure how he'd react once he discovered that Lee Ji-Hye was part of the scummy brigade.

'I'll be happy if he just remains hostile toward her.'

I couldn't imagine how he would react once he discovered the regression plan. The possibility was slim, and it was less likely to happen, but he might end up joining the brigade. I wasn't sure if Lee Ji-Hye would allow that, but who could say for sure?

'Hyun-Sung joining the brigade is going a little too far.'

I had seen Doom Hyun-Sung, Doom Doom Hyun-Sung, Doom Doom Doom Hyun-Sung, and many more types of Hyun-Sung, but a Brigade Hyun-Sung was just absurd.

However, there was a high chance that he'd do something extreme, as he had even attempted to take his own life just to regress once more.

“We have to limit the information,” I told her.

‘We need to limit the information that Kim Hyun-Sung can obtain. He might be standing there because he still hasn’t realized the fact that he can come up here.’

Kim Hyun-Sung was already an idol on the continent. With just a few steps, he would be able to come up here. The situation might get worse if he discovered the regression plan, Lee Ji-Hye's status, his holy power, or the fact that he had become an idoli.

I just had to be his reliable support.

‘I’ll take care of the rest.’

I'd help Hyun-Sung earn a ton of holy power…

Now that I thought about it, telling Jo Hye-Jin to make sure that Hyun-Sung would receive limited information was a bit extreme. I thought it was better to say that I was doing everything within my power so that Kim Hyun-Sung could focus solely on his task.

It was an inevitable choice for the continent and the Blue Guild, after all.

- But that’s…

“I’m right. I’ll reconsider what you said, but we really have no other choice. Hyun-Sung has other things he needs to handle. I’ll give him the order myself, so don’t worry. *Ah*, now that I think about it…” I paused.

I heard knocking on the door.

- Miss Hye-Jin, it’s me.

‘He’s too early.’

I was relieved that he didn’t visit early in the morning yesterday.

I was sure that he had already heard the news from a guild staffer.

Jo Hye-Jin and I had sent the message after making a decision on what to say. We couldn't hide it, so we just wrote a simple report. I didn't think he came as soon as he got the message because it was late.

However, I was sure he had a difficult time enduring it, even though it was just hours.

- I’ll be right there, Master.

- Okay.

Jo Hye-Jin couldn’t look at Kim Hyun-Sung. Kim Hyun-Sung was pacing back and forth outside her door, and it was an amusing sight. I was sure many things were going through his head, as this incident was a small clue right after the soulmate incident.

“Don't be nervous. Just remember what we discussed,” I reminded her.

Jo Hye-Jin nodded, but she hesitated in front of the door. Then, she turned around and checked herself in the mirror. It seemed that Jo Hye-Jin still liked KIm Hyun-Sung. She blushed upon realizing that I was watching her.

However, she still opened the door after fixing her hair.

- Guild Master.

- I’m sorry for visiting you so early in the morning, Miss Hye-Jin.

- It’s fine. I was actually going to contact you. As I mentioned yesterday…

- Right. Let’s head out for now.

- Okay.

Kim Hyun-Sung was staring at the window.

‘Why is he staring at the window like that? His stare might break it.’

Even as they were walking, he kept glancing at the window.

- So…

- It was yesterday night. A spear suddenly dropped down from the sky, and I heard that I was to represent the sub guild master.

- Is that right? If You don't mind me asking, what did you say in front of the statue?

- I just prayed like I normally do. I was just talking about the things that happened that day…

- I see. Did you hear anything else?

- I think we'll be receiving divine messages little by little.

- I see…

- It might have something to do with the clue.

- I was thinking the same thing.

I thought they were walking without a destination in mind.

At first, I thought they'd go to his office and talk about it, but they were getting farther and farther away from his office. It'd be nice if they discussed this over breakfast, but they were focused on this serious conversation.

In the end, they stopped at the Blue Guild's outdoor training ground.

After sitting on the chairs, they continued their conversation.

'You're a pretty good liar, Jo Hye-Jin.'

The way she talked about the things we discussed made me think that she was no different from me or Ji-Hye noona. I suddenly realized why we liked Jo Hye-Jin so much. Jo Hye-Jin spat the lines I had prepared without batting an eye, and I could tell she was in sync with her character.

- It's possible that he's responding to our voices. It's still too early to say anything,

but I think the sub guild master is in the middle of looking for a way as well. Actually, it's more like I *felt* it. I'm sure he wants to return as well.

- You can feel that as well?

- Yes. It's hard to explain those emotions but as the representative of a god…

- Can I try touching the spear?

'I knew he was going to ask.'

Kim Hyun-Sung's request could be considered rude based on the common sense of this world, but it wasn't a difficult request in the Blue Guild.

Jo Hye-Jin nodded and handed over her spear.

Kim Hyun-Sung was clearly nervous. He gulped and reached out toward the spear slowly, but…

'Of course, he can't hold it.'

Booooooooooooooooooom!

A radiant light erupted from the spear; Jo Hye-Jin's hair and Kim Hyun-Sung's cloak fluttered violently. The spear was going to reject everyone except for its owner.

If it were an ordinary person—no, even if the most powerful adventurer on the continent were to touch it, the spear would send them flying.

Kim Hyun-Sung was doing his best to withstand the rejection.

I could see that he was determined not to let go of the weapon.

A crisp *crack* echoed, and the ground beneath Kim Hyun-Sung caved in. I didn't understand why he wouldn't let go of the spear, even though he was sinking into the ground. However, I was sure he was aware that the spear was rejecting him.

- Guild Master?

- I'm just… analyzing it.

'I think you're doing more than that.'

In the end, he was using his magic and holy power. The problem was that…

'What the hell? Why does it hurt? Why am I in pain?'

I felt a tingling pain throughout my body.

'Wait, stop. Shit. You shouldn't try to suppress it using force. Stop, stop.'

"*Ahhhhh!*"

I could see him biting his lips and trying to suppress the spear somehow.

Actually, it was more like he was trying to control it.

'Shit, stop trying to suppress it, you bastard. Hey! Shit… '

This ridiculous event came to an end when Jo Hye-Jin grabbed her spear.

'Shit… shit… '

-…

- It's… a nice spear.

Kim Hyun-Sung started walking quietly as if nothing had happened. Then, he walked up to the spear sitting on one side of the training ground.

He stretched out his arm to grab it, but I had no idea what he was trying to do.

It seemed like he was jealous of Jo Hye-Jin. It was like he was saying, "I know how to use a spear, too. I may be more skilled with the sword, but I'm pretty skilled at using a spear as well."

'Is there anything he can't do?'

He was just warming up with the spear, but he looked pretty comfortable with it.

Even Jo Hye-Jin seemed to have acknowledged his skills. I had no idea how to wield a

spear, but the fact that she was making *that* kind of face meant that Kim Hyung-Sung was really skilled with the spear.

- There was a time when I had to wield a spear. It's been a while, so I've become rusty.

- I see.

- C-Can I touch it one more time?

"Don't give it to him," I told her.

- I-I'm sorry, Master.

- One more time… please. I just want to… check something…

- I don't mind you touching it again, but I think the spear will reject you again…

- That's unfortunate.

- I'm sorry.

- It's fine. I'm sorry…

The situation became awkward.

Kim Hyun-Sung had to have realized what he was trying to do.

I could tell because his sadness soon turned to embarrassment. They were both avoiding each other's gaze. An awkward silence descended upon them, but it was quickly shattered by Elena's approach.

'She's here.'

I wasn't sure what kind of news she had brought with her, but I was sure that it wasn't good news. It was pretty obvious.

'Ready?'

Lee Ji-Hye had decided to make her move.

CHAPTER 787
THE LAST (20)

I was kind of nervous—no, it was more like I was curious because I didn't know where Ji-Hye noona was going to start or what she was going to do first. I considered a few places, but… I couldn't guarantee that she would actually hit those places. For now…

'It can't be the Democratic Country or Lindel, right?'

There was no way she would go as far as immediately bombarding the places where the most powerful figures of the continent were located. The continent was big, and there were many things she could do as well. I was sure she wouldn't want to attack a high-risk location.

However, this was what I meant about how she had the ability to make the first move.

She could slowly roll around a *really* small snowball or go big from the start. She could also execute her plan from a place that wasn't even on the map yet.

Elena felt complicated, and she looked as if she was in disbelief as well.

Jo Hye-Jin holding her spear was looking at Elena along with Kim Hyun-Sung.

'Ah, now that I think about it… I should send him off.'

After all, I had decided to exclude him from this incident.

Elena started catching her breath as soon as she stopped in front of them. She was trying her best to say something, but she couldn't because she was out of breath.

- Guild Mast… *haa… haa…*

Now was the right time.

[Sunset Swordsman.]

Kim Hyun-Sung was surprised. He looked around in shock because it had been a while since he heard my voice.

- A-Are you busy? There's something I need to tell…

[Can you hear me, Sunset Swordsman?]

He seemed to be thinking for a moment, but…

'Do you really need to think about this?'

- Guild Master?

'I called for you, so you know you have no time, right? Do you really have time to talk to Elena right now? I might lose connection in a bit… I'm your top priority, right?'

[Sunset Swordsman? Sunset Swordsman?]

- I'm sorry, Miss Elena. If there's something you need to talk about, please talk to Miss Hye-Jin first. I'll make sure I hear it from her later. I heard… Mr. Ki-Young's voice just now.

- I see.

- I'll see you later.

Elena didn't seem disappointed. It seemed that she thought I was talking to Kim Hyun-Sung because of what was happening.

I couldn't help but sigh after seeing Kim Hyun-Sung run to the temple, but it made me happy.

I thought he would kick open the gates of the temple, but he stopped in front of the main gate. He hesitated before taking out Durandal, which was hanging from his waist, and sticking it into the ground. I wasn't sure why he was doing that all of a sudden, but… the Mythic-rank sword was now sticking out of the ground.

'I don't have time, man… I didn't call you to put your sword down… '

If I could, I would've given him a sword as well to make him feel better, but I didn't have a reason to give him one at the moment. We were connected to each other, all thanks to the Regressor Instruction Manual, so it'd be meaningless to choose him as my chosen one. If I were to use up our funds to give him a sword, it would be an iron sword that'd be cheaper and worse than Durandal and Juliena.

- Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young?

[Sunset Swordsman. My voice… Can you hear my voice?]

- Yes, I can hear it. I'm listening.

[I need…]

- What?

[Your… help. Y-You're… help…]

- Mr. Ki-Young? Mr. Ki-Young!

[Sunset…]

I still had no idea where to send him, so I decided to pretend like I had lost connection.

The shining statue started losing its light.

He wouldn't be able to leave the statue, so I was sure he wouldn't hear about what Ji-Hye noona was doing right now.

Kim Hyun-Sung suddenly looked nervous, but I didn't have the time to focus on him. I ignored the screaming Hyun-Sung and turned around to see Jo Hye-Jin and Elena talking to each other.

I thought it'd be best if I focused on them right now.

- I'm sure the guild master has heard the news as well since Mr. Lee Ki-Young probably knows the truth because he's standing next to Elune.

- Can you tell me what's going on?

'Yeah, what the hell is going on?'

- There's a problem in Everia.

- What?

'Has she decided to attack the Elf Kingdom first?'

- The World Tree…

- Yes?

- I just received news that… the World Tree has fallen. The World Tree that has been protecting the Everia Kingdom has been destroyed… and it can't be restored.

I could hear Elune crying tears of blood.

- I haven't heard the details yet, but… the Blue Guild was the only place I could deliver this news to… I don't… I don't know what to do. *Heuk*… My brother told me not to tell anyone, but… I…

'Why is it that when something happens, it's always the World Tree?'

Why was it that whenever the continent was in danger, the first thing that would get hit would always be the World Tree? I pondered whether Ji-Hye noona had done this, and I soon nodded, as she enjoyed cliches as well.

She probably chose the World Tree as a signal for the continent's destruction, and honestly…

'It's a reasonable decision.'

The World Tree was one of the continent's most important fortresses, even in our first lives. In fact, the World Tree's defense mechanism was the reason we managed to preserve some of our forces during the war with the Republic. If Ji-Hye noona was looking at the big picture, getting rid of the World Tree wasn't a bad choice.

I was more curious about how she became strong enough to do such a thing.

'How the hell did she pull that off?'

The World Tree was like castle walls. The Everia Kingdom was basically a natural fortress, and it had been there for an immeasurable amount of time. Spells thrown from the outside weren't going to work on it, and it was also impossible to invade the kingdom by ordinary means. I was sure she could do the latter if she had an army, but she didn't have an army. It was basically impossible to damage Elune's tree unless Lee Ji-Hye had somehow started living in the root of the World Tree like Salit.

After the recent war, everyone was living in peace, so security around the World Tree had to have loosened. Regardless, I couldn't even think of a way to destroy the World Tree.

'How in the world did she do it?'

I was sure there was a way, but that wasn't important right now.

The situations that would unfold due to the World Tree's destruction would be problematic.

- I think… I should return to my kingdom as fast as possible, Miss Jo Hye-Jin.

- We should go together. I'll prepare as fast as possible and… Actually, I'll call for Miss Ha-Yan right now.

- I'd be grateful if you did that, but…

- Your kingdom is involved. There's no need to thank me.

She was so cool.

Elena nodded, and they continued talking.

However, Miss Kim Mi-Young soon arrived, and as expected, she brought with her some bad news.

- Miss Jo Hye-Jin.

- Yes, Miss Kim Mi-Young?

All eyes were on Kim Mi-Young, and Elena looked nervous. After noticing that Miss Kim Mi-Young was reading her expression, Elena realized that the news was about

Everia Kingdom.

- We received news that Everia Kingdom is currently detaining visitors.

"…"

-…

- Each nation and guild is requesting to free the detained visitors, but the Everia Kingdom has yet to respond. The Sacred Democratic Country is urging the three major guilds to step up to resolve this issue. At the moment…

'Shit… Ji-Hye noona… '

- The communication nodes connected to Everia are blocked.

'Ah… '

- Miss Oscar wants to talk to Mr. Elias through you, Miss Elena, but…

- I'll try talking to him. This can't be true. I'm sure there's a misunderstanding. Everia Kingdom… detaining visitors?

- I'll leave this to you, Miss Elena.

'Seriously… Ji-Hye noona… '

- What's going on?

Jo Hye-Jin mumbled.

- No way…

"No, I don't think Miss Ji-Hye has infiltrated the Everia Kingdom and has set up a firewall to block external communication nodes," I said.

-…

"I'm sure the elves and Elias of the Everia Kingdom are detaining the visitors. It's definitely not Miss Ji-Hye detaining them. The kingdom has just opened to the

outside world, so they're definitely thinking that the culprit is among the outsiders.

"The reason they blocked the communication nodes is that they don't want others to know that the World Tree has been destroyed. You understand why the kingdom is detaining humans, right? I'm not sure how long this will last, but it may last a really long time," I explained.

Jo Hye-Jin nodded lightly as if she understood what I was saying. I was sure she was thinking about many different possibilities. She was probably thinking about the possible scenarios that might unfold now that the World Tree was gone.

It wasn't as simple as the elves losing their guardian deity, but it was the most important part. The fact that they had lost their natural fortress could snowball into something bigger. To make matters worse, The World Tree provided the elves with infinite resources.

Humans were bound to suffer as well. Elves had become a big influence among humans, and one could find elven items anywhere, not just in Lindel but all over the continent. Elven culture had become widespread all over the continent as well, and it had gotten to the point that Lindel even created an Elf Town for them.

Many guilds were trading with the elves as well, so what would happen if the trade between the two abruptly came to a halt?

There would be a huge spike in the unemployment rate, and the guilds with businesses related to elves would be in big trouble as well. The clans and guilds would raise their voices to the nation, imploring the country to take care of the issue.

The nation wouldn't be able to ignore those voices. Actually, the mid-sized cities of the nations such as the Democratic Country, the Republic, and the Union of Kingdoms would definitely raise their voices first.

I was sure they'd be very dissatisfied with everything, including what was about to happen in the future. They'd probably ask why the elves had stopped trading with them and why the elves had blocked the communication nodes.

However, they wouldn't be able to tell the truth.

There was no way they could announce that the World Tree had been destroyed.

Elves and humans were friends; they had been working with each other and were eternal allies who had been protecting the continent together.

However, I wasn't sure if every single elf and human thought the same. If there were various vested interests involved in the matter, I was certain that it would be easy for them to turn their backs on their so-called eternal allies.

The World Tree wasn’t Ji-Hye’s noona’s target. Of course, destroying the World Tree itself had a huge impact. However, her true goal was pulling the trigger using the World Tree, and I could already deduce the identity of that trigger.

The trigger was the elves' anxiety—the lessons that their long history had taught them about humanity.

CHAPTER 788
THE LAST (21)

- Sub Guild Master, where is the guild master headed?

“I sent him north, and he’s probably on his way right now. He might’ve reached there by now since he flew there…” I replied.

'I think he's already already there.'

- Is there anything up north?

“No, there’s nothing there. I sent him to a remote place that has yet to be fully developed. I’m not sure if he’ll find any clue, but I thought sending him to a dungeon for now would be a good idea. I honestly don’t know if there’s even a dungeon there, but I’m sure he’ll find it. You know how he is. He’ll find one even if there isn’t one,” I replied.

- You shouldn’t have sent him away by himself.

“Are you worried about something?” I asked.

- The guild master is mentally unstable right now, so he needs other people to help him. If anything, you should’ve created an expedition team to go with him.

“It should be fine as long as he doesn’t feel bothered. I’ll be keeping a close eye on him, so nothing will happen, and I’ll talk to him from time to time, so don’t worry too much. You just focus on your tasks. *Ah*, and please watch over Ha-Yan as well,” I requested.

- Miss Sora seems to be taking care of her pretty well.

It did seem that way, and they looked really close whenever they were eating together in the temporary camp. Ha-Yan did look like a bomb that was going to explode at any moment, but she did look calm.

She seemed to be enjoying the lunchbox that Han Sora made with a new character.

'They look like they're out on a picnic.'

I had no idea what Jung Ha-Yan was thinking, as it wasn't her job to think about headache-inducing issues. She wasn't interested in the elves' actions as well. Jung Ha-Yan was here to go to the kingdom with Jo Hye-Jin and Elena, but…

- D-Do you think something serious will happen?

- I-I'm not sure… It'd be great if nothing happened, right?

- I-I-I hope not…

There was a chance that she might be able to write down her own legendary story.

I remember how Jung Ha-Yan giggled quietly when she heard the news that there were problems at Everia Kingdom. She looked completely different from Elena, who looked anxious just a few feet away from her. Elena's mood hadn't changed at all. She hadn't been eating properly as well because she was so anxious.

Han Sora had to be feeling bothered because she kept glancing at Elena. In the end, she went up to Elena, comforted her, and came back. However, Han Sora was an expert on Jung Ha-Yan, so I was sure that she had made a bad decision to comfort Elena.

- W-W-What did you two talk about?

- Well… there's a problem at the kingdom… and she seemed really sad about that, so I wanted to comfort her a bit…

- W-What did you talk about exactly…

- You don't have to worry about that.

- W-What did you talk about?!

- Well…

- D-Don't get too close to her. S-She's kind of strange.

Jung Ha-Yan was obviously the strange one here. I was worried her eyes would roll back because she was breathing heavily. Her eyes were wide open as well. I was sure that she wouldn't do any self-harm. Probably…

Ahn Ki-Mo was sitting on the left side of the girls, who were having their own conversation. It had been a while since I saw him by himself.

He was an extrovert, so he was comforting Elena while petting Alps's dog, Shiro.

Alps was staring worriedly at Jo Hye-Jin, who was talking to herself.

I was sure outsiders would think that Jo Hye-Jin had gone mad because of what she was doing.

Hwang Jung-Yeon, the magic scholar who came to finish her task, had decided to join the expedition as well.

Overall, the party didn't look so bad. Actually, it was just right. She wasn't chosen to fight in the first place, so if something was to happen, Jung Ha-Yan would handle the issues. Fortunately, it was unlikely that something untoward would happen.

'She'll probably just observe the situation… '

Since we had thrown in a huge bait, I was sure she wanted to see how things were going.

"So what are we supposed to do?" I asked.

- I'm not an idiot, Sub Guild Master. The first thing we're going to do is talk to Mr. Elias—

"Wrong. The top priority is investigating the World Tree, and finding traces of Lee Ji-Hye is the second task. There's a reason I added Miss Jung-Yeon and Alps to the party. We have to find her," I interrupted.

- Shouldn't we take care of the issue ahead of us—

"No, we must follow her. If we start by taking care of the things ahead of us, we'll only be chasing after Lee Ji-Hye's tail until the continent is in ruins. Don't just think about stopping her. We have to prepare useful cards as well. I'll be straightforward. If

the two races enter an armed conflict in Everia, you must not get involved. We have to prioritize our jobs," I explained.

- But.

"Please listen to me. You know very well that we've never suffered a loss by listening to me. I'm not saying that your method is wrong. It's just that my method simply fits the situation better. I know about Lee Ji-Hye better than anyone," I said.

- I'll follow for now, but keep this in mind. I have never given my free will to you. I didn't choose to represent you so that I could become your doll. If I believe it's the right thing to do and it's something I must do…

"Yeah, yeah, I understand. I never thought you'd completely agree with my words in the first place, so no need to react that way. I just want you to keep your priorities in mind," I told her.

- Okay.

"Let's get going. If we move quickly, we should be able to enter within an hour. If possible, I'd like to enter right away through a teleporter, but…" I trailed off.

- The kingdom doesn't support it so we have no other choice. They're cautious about many things, so we must obey their decisions.

"Yeah, well…"

- You don't have to be so nervous. As I said, I don't think Miss Ji-Hye is the one behind this issue. Even if she was somehow involved with the destruction of the World Tree, I'm sure there's a reason behind it.

I couldn't really agree with her.

'When did Ji-Hye noona create such an upright image of herself?'

I clicked my tongue, annoyed by Lee Ji-Hye's personality.

Meanwhile, Jo Hye-Jin delivered information to the guild members. Alps worked quickly, so the camp was soon cleaned and packed up. Eventually, the guild members continued on their journey once more.

The scenery changed as they walked and talked about various topics. It was a familiar sight to me. Of course, we were missing a few members, but the scenery was enough to make me smile. After walking for about an hour, I finally saw Everia Kingdom, and it looked different from before.

'A wooden fence?'

A large wooden fence surrounded the kingdom, but it looked pretty durable for it to be a simple fence. It looked as if large trees were covering the castle walls, so the elves had definitely used their spells to create this wooden fence. Even now, I could still see branches moving upward.

'They'll end up touching the sky at this rate.'

Elena bit her lips harder after Everia's change. She was obviously dissatisfied with Elias, the current leader of the elves, and his decision to do something like this. She walked past Jo Hye-Jin and walked briskly toward the kingdom.

- Open the door. It's me, Elena.

-…

- Open the door. I'm Elena of the Everia Kingdom!

'Our Queen El is so cool… '

The branches soon opened up a path. It seemed that they had not designated a separate entrance or exit in the first place; they simply created a system where they'd be able to part the branches everywhere to create entrances.

'It's understandable… '

The elves weren't really that knowledgeable when it came to something like this, and it made sense as the World Tree had been protecting them since time immemorial.

I thought they would come up with a different solution, but they were adapting way better than I thought. Humans weren't the only ones who had been influenced by the elves, as it was also true the other way around.

I eventually saw Elias and a group of armed elf soldiers. It had been a long time since

I saw Elias, but I didn't really feel relieved to see him. Fortunately, they didn't seem hostile toward us.

The situation was grim, but I was sure they weren't crazy enough to show hostility toward the heroes of the continent. Some of them were actually showing respect toward Jung Ha-Yan. The robed elves in the back nodded at Jung Ha-Yan.

Jung Ha-Yan smiled brightly as well.

'Are they followers of the god of magic or something?'

I couldn't help but think that there was a reason behind Jung Ha-Yan's recent behavior.

- What's with all the noise, Elena?

- What do you think you're doing, brother?!

-…

-…

- Let's talk inside.

- No, I must say what's on my mind before going in. How dare you detain the visitors of the kingdom?! Also, I demand an explanation for all of this. Are you planning on building a birdcage around the kingdom?!

- That's none of your concern.

- I obviously—

- You're the one that left the kingdom, Elena. You're not in the position to interfere in the affairs of the kingdom. I'm just doing my job.

I had no idea how to join the sudden drama.

The furious Elena and Elias were arguing loudly, and the sight made me wonder if that was how they usually were as siblings. Even the soldiers behind Elias had no idea what to do. In the end, one of Elias' aides talked to him, and the argument came

to an end.

More accurately speaking, the argument entered a state of lull.

- I’m sorry, members of the Blue Guild. And… Miss Jo Hye-Jin.

- It’s been a while, Mr. Elias.

- It’s nice to see you again.

Elias' ears perked up slightly, and he greeted Jo Hye-Jin.

There was no way they were a good pair, but it seemed that they had met each other before for business-related discussions. Actually, it was more like that bastard, Elios, had feelings for her.

The way he was trembling ever so slightly before Jo Hye-Jin was proof of that.

I couldn’t help but look at Jo Hye-Jin in a different light.

‘Wow… when did they… ’

Had something happened between them? Or was it Elios acting this way? What was going on? When did they meet ee each other? Had they met each other privately? I couldn't help but regret the fact that I hadn't been watching Jo Hye-Jin closely with the Telescope.

It was likely to be a one-sided love, but it was possible that they’d been exchanging messages with each other.

- I’m sorry I couldn’t visit you.

- It’s fine. I already know how busy you are, Mr. Elias.

- Have you been doing well?

‘Look at this man.’

Elias relaxed a bit.

I was just suspicious of it at first, but I was certain of it now. Well, Jo Hye-Jin had always been pretty popular among the elves. Unfortunately, Elias wasn't a good fit for her. I had no ill will toward Elias, but he wasn't good enough to be in a lovey-dovey relationship with our Hye-Jin.

'She has Hyun-Sung, too.'

- First, I'd like to thank the members of the Blue Guild for coming all the way here. Thank you for bringing Elena safely back to us.

- We were just doing our job.

- Normally, we'd greet you as guests of the kingdom, but…

-…

- Due to the current situation, we're unable to give you proper treatment.

'This bastard.'

He was clearly trying to banish us.

- What are you saying?!

- Elena.

- They're heroes who saved Everia and the continent!

- Elena!

- They've heard of *that* incident, so you don't have to worry about our secret getting leaked, brother.

'This family is currently in the worst state possible.'

- I already told Miss Jo Hye-Jin, the woman you adore!

I truly never imagined that she'd say something like that.

'Aaahhh… What do we do… '

“This is really too much… Seriously,” I commented.

Elias bit his lips, and his face turned red.

‘Elena is just pure evil, damn it.’

Belial, who arrived at some point, applauded Elena.

CHAPTER 789
THE LAST (22)

- What are you…

Jo Hye-Jin was surprised.

Obviously, Elias was more surprised than her. Honestly, I would understand if he turned around and ran away right now.

“I think I’m going to try recruiting her.”

I wasn't sure what kind of potential Belial had seen in Elena, but he started talking to someone. I wanted to tell him to stop, but I couldn’t look away from the soap opera before me.

The fact that there wasn’t anyone here who could fix this awkward silence broke my heart. Hwang Jung-Yeon cast an excited gaze at the two, and it wasn't really strange as she had always been famous for being a drama lover.

Elena didn’t seem like she was going to fix this situation either. In fact, she still hadn't realized the mistake that she had made. She was actually yelling at Elias, so I couldn’t help but think that she had lost her mind because of the ongoing situation.

- I recall something like this happening last time! I don’t think my choice was wrong. Even if you make a birdcage like this and cower, you know better than anyone that this will not resolve the issue!

-…

- Hiding the problem has never been a good thing. I can’t believe you've already forgotten the lesson you learned from the previous incident! I knew you’ve always been close-minded, but I had no idea you’d be so stubborn when we're at a critical juncture!

She was cornering him and forcing him to eat her knuckle sandwiches. Wow…

-…

It looked like a simple argument, but to me, Elena looked like she was cornering Elias.

Elias was simply taking the beating after losing his will to resist.

- You've always been like this even when we were younger. You've always attempted to take responsibility, but you've never been able to resolve anything.

- Elena.

- What are you going to do now? Are you going to make the same decision as last time? You need to tell the soldiers! Hurry and give them your order! Didn't you tell them to tie us up and detain us? Are you planning on keeping Miss Jo Hye-Jin, the woman you adore, here in Everia?!

'Don't say it again. Don't… make him blush again.'

- We've changed, and the humans have changed as well. You know this better than anyone! It hasn't even been a year since we joined forces and protected the continent! I can't believe you still can't trust humans! Miss Jo Hye-Jin is human as well—she's human!

'We understand… so just stop… please… '

- *Haa… haa… haa…*

- Please move. This issue isn't just Everia's issue. The destruction of the World Tree is everyone's problem.

I didn't hear an answer, but Elena started walking into the wooden fence. The guild members looked at each other and then followed her. Obviously, Elias couldn't stop Elena, who was on a rampage. Elias had taken a good beating, but he also realized that Elena wasn't exactly wrong. There was no other way.

'Are they going to suppress the Blue Guild members?'

Did they really think Ha-Yan would just stand by and do nothing? It would be great news if Everia survived Ha-Yan's gravity-type spells. The only thing Elias could do

was make comments whenever Elena overstepped her boundaries.

- I also understand humans. I understand them even better thanks to the last war, Elena.

-…

- I know… what they're capable of, how strong they are, and how much stronger they can get on their own.

- As long as I have my comrades, humans will not point their swords toward the elves.

Elena looked cool when she passed by Elias with determined steps. Jo Hye-Jin was also trying to pass him while trying to read his expression. It seemed that she felt bad about staying quiet earlier because she spoke awkwardly.

- T-Thank you for forgiving our rudeness, Mr. Elias. However, I hope you realize that this situation… is really important…

- It's fine. I should be the one… apologizing. I'm sure… it was really shocking.

- It's fine. I'm sure Miss Elena is misunderstanding something. Mr. Elias… *ha… haha…* It doesn't make sense, and I know that better than anyone. You don't have to worry about me, so…

- Well.

- What?

- Saying that I don't have any other feelings for you isn't exactly something that doesn't make sense.

- *Ah…*

'This bastard… '

- I see…

'You jerk.'

He was the son of that scum, Elune, so it made sense for him to be skilled with words.

- Well, then… I'll go ahead first.

To make things worse, he turned around and went in as if he had no regrets.

I could tell Jo Hye-Jin was confused because she just stood there in disbelief. Of course, I thought that she was just shocked; there was no way her heart would waver.

How could something like this happen during chaotic times?

I couldn't help but cough at this ridiculous situation.

"What's going on?" I asked.

- I'm… not sure either.

"Have you two met before?" I questioned.

- No, we haven't met privately, but… we met in public places and drank tea or had a meal together… O-Of course, there were other people with us. I don't know what's going on. I…

"You're shady and wicked," I commented.

-…

"Well, it's useless to talk about this now, but I don't really think he's a good man. Just keep that in mind. I'm telling you this as a friend. I know because I drank with him a few times. He has a wicked side," I warned her.

- It's none of your business.

"Just think of it as advice from a friend. I don't want to talk long about this especially during a situation like this. Let's hurry inside. We need to see exactly what's going on," I instructed her.

-…

“Hurry,” I urged.

- Okay.

Jo Hye-Jin stepped into Everia and chased after the guild members. I was worried that she wouldn’t be able to focus on the situation, but it seemed that I didn’t need to worry.

Jo Hye-Jin looked around slowly.

Elena had collapsed to the ground and was crying. The other guild members had similar reactions. I had already seen Everia's condition through the Telescope, but I still couldn't quite get used to the shocking changes.

The large World Tree in the middle of the kingdom had twisted into a bizarre shape. I wasn’t sure whether it had burned down or had rotted away, but it didn't look alive. The nearby elves looked both nervous and worried.

‘Ha… ’

I was kind of glad that the detained humans had been understanding of the situation.

They sympathized with the bad things that had happened to the elves and why they had no choice but to detain them. It seemed like the elves were detaining them in the most humane way possible, and it seemed like they were requesting everyone's cooperation rather than using brute force.

Of course, not everyone thought the same.

- You better explain what’s going on right now. Our guild will not sit idly by.

- Do you guys have any idea what you’re doing? This goes against the continental law, you bastards!

- *Ah*, shit… I have an important meeting. Damn it…

- I don’t know why you’re doing this, but I guarantee that your entire race will have to take responsibility for this!

Those who were causing trouble were definitely being forceful.

- It’s the Blue Guild!

- The Blue Guild is here! Miss Jung Ha-Yan! Miss Jung Ha-Yan! Please help us!

They started screaming upon seeing the Blue Guild. It seemed like they wanted us to resolve this issue, but this was none of our business.

- Miss Jo Hye-Jin!

I understood why they were so angry. No one would be happy about being detained here for someone else's wrongdoings. *Ah*, of course, I couldn't quite understand the remarks of those who thought they were superior.

‘We’re living in the 21st century… There are still people acting like that?’

Jo Hye-Jin was also watching them uncomfortably.

- Do you guys have any idea who’s helping all of you live a good life here? Do you have any idea what you’re doing right now? You want to go back to how things were before, you dirty elves?

‘That bastard should just die.’

- Miss Jo Hye-Jin! Miss Jo Hye-Jin!

It was ridiculous how a person was screaming out Jo Hye-Jin’s name, and it had been a while since I saw her frown like that. She was making the same face she made when we first met.

“Please say something, Miss Hye-Jin,” I told her.

- The Blue Guild cannot resolve this issue for all of you.

-…

- We’ve come to investigate the great loss the continent has experienced. We understand that you’re in a terrible situation right now, but the minimal action the Everia Kingdom is taking doesn’t seem all that strange. The loss of the World Tree not only affects the Everia Kingdom but the entire continent as well. I don’t want to believe it, but we cannot exclude the possibility that some of you might be involved.

- What do you mean?

- I'm saying the culprit might be among all of you. Of course, it's less likely, but… it's part of… the procedure.

- What the hell are you saying?! Are you out of your mind?!

'This bastard… are you out of your mind?'

- *Oh ho*… Now I understand what's happening… You bitch. The Blue Guild is siding with these dirty elves… They must be thinking that the Blue Guild has the same power as before, right?

'…'

- You think we'll stand by and do nothing if you say that? Will you understand if I told you that I'm close to someone who's part of a huge guild in the Republic? You don't think we're a bunch of nobodies, do you? Do you want to lose all of your clients? If you're a hero of the continent, then act like one, you crazy bitch!

Jo Hye-Jin bit her lips and even I felt like I was going to go crazy.

'Ha… shit… really?'

It was so absurd that I was at a loss for words.

I knew the guild was a mess, but I didn't think that the Blue Guild's situation was this bad. It seemed that there were indeed crazy bastards everywhere, but I couldn't recall them making such crazy remarks in public.

Was it because of the Blue Guild's current predicament?

I couldn't quite understand why they were making such crazy remarks despite the fact that the guild had Kim Hyun-Sung and Jung Ha-Yan.

Was it because Kim Hyun-Sung was only listed as the guild master on paper and rumors about his retirement were spreading recently? Was it because of the news about Jung Ha-Yan transferring to the magic tower? Was it because the guild was doing incomprehensible things with its funds? It wasn't because of my death, was it?

What was even more ridiculous was that Jo Hye-Jin was at a loss for words. I didn't know why she was thinking about the aftermath of this situation.

That was none of our concern, but she couldn't seem to understand that.

-…

"…"

"Kill that bastard, Hye-Jin," I ordered.

- What?

"Kill him," I repeated.

- What are you saying…

"Actually, don't kill him. Just scare him a bit. Don't hold back and do whatever you want. You don't need to hold back. Why are you trying to hold it in? It's really ridiculous.

"I was never the type to go around and talk proudly about the guild, but it's really absurd that the guild has fallen so far to the point that we're being looked down on by bastards like them. Shit. The Republic? What about the Republic?" I complained.

I was surprised to receive this kind of treatment from someone who could only qualify as a one-time extra.

'What has Miss Kim Mi-Young been doing? Why hasn't she been getting rid of bastards like them?'

It wasn't actually her fault, but I couldn't help but gnash my teeth because of the unbelievable reality that had unfolded before me.

- But…

"I'll take responsibility, so do whatever you want," I said.

With that, Jo Hye-Jin bit her lips and approached the man slowly.

The extra who was screaming out her name earlier looked at her with an arrogant look.

He was probably thinking that she was going to help them somehow, but it didn’t take long for his expression to change.

His wicked smile had vanished, and his face was covered in beaded sweat. His legs were shaking violently as well. He couldn’t even breathe properly anymore, and he ended up collapsing to the ground. He started coughing as his lungs spasmed, unable to withstand the pressure that Jo Hye-Jin was boring down on him.

- Say it again.

- *Kek… Cough… Kek…*

- I said say it again.

-…

‘That’s too weak.’

However, Jo Hye-Jin seemed to have vented out a bit of the stress that she was feeling.

Of course, I still decided to take a mental note of that guy. I'd take care of him myself later.

- Stay quiet and follow instructions. Follow the instructions, and you will not be harmed.

‘Too weak.’

I thought the image that Lee Ji-Hye was drawing was starting to come together.

The Red Mercenary Guild had closed its doors, and the Black Swan Guild was keeping quiet. The Blue Guild was at rock bottom, so the three guilds of Lindel couldn't maintain the balance of the continent. Kasugano Yuno's guild had closed down as well.

Since the Sacred Democratic Country was falling apart, the scums who were in

hiding were starting to crawl out. Of course, they wouldn't just come out openly, as no one wanted to get a beating from Kim Hyun-Sung.

However, they had come out to do everything that would benefit them and only them.

I thought this was just the beginning, but the news I heard made me reconsider the assumptions I had made so far.

- I-It might explode.

-…

- It might go *boom!* I-If that… thing… explodes… this whole place will blow up too.

CHAPTER 790
THE LAST (23)

Lee Ji-Hye's thoughts were out of character. The news Jung Ha-Yan, Han Sora, and Hwang Jung-Yeon had brought wasn't something the Lee Ji-Hye I knew would do.

- What are you talking about, Miss Ha-Yan?

- I'll explain it, Miss Jo Hye-Jin. It looks peaceful right now, but the World Tree is in a very unstable state.

-…

- It'll be easier to understand if I said the surface of the tree is suppressing the tumultuous energy inside of it. It looks fine on the outside, but the World Tree is suffering from an inner conflict. It has the tendency to grow, but it is suppressing that growth.

-…

- It's hard to describe. I… couldn't understand what Miss Ha-Yan said either… What's important is that we don't have much time until the World Tree—no, that hideous thing explodes.

The mages of the Blue Guild entered the briefing room and gathered around Jo Hye-Jin.

Hwang Jung-Yeon was adding details to Jung Ha-Yan's explanation with an awkward smile. She was even drawing it out while explaining, but there was no way Jo Hye-Jin and I would understand that.

We didn't really need to understand it because the important part was that it was going to explode soon.

- How much time do we have left?

- T-Three days?

-…

-…

- Is Mr. Elias aware of this?

- We haven't told him yet. I thought letting you know first was the right thing to do, and we have a reason for coming all this way… Wouldn't it be better if you told him?

- There's really no need for that, but…

- I think it's best if you tell him. We're currently doing additional investigations. We're searching… along with the details you mentioned… We're also considering working with the mages from the Magic Tower… I think it'll be difficult to get approval for this…

- Is this something we can stop?

- I-I-I'm not sure…

Jo Hye-Jin looked conflicted after seeing the uncertainty on Jung Ha-Yan's face.

'Is it better to evacuate everyone?'

She seemed to be thinking that way because Jung Ha-Yan's expression was worrisome.

An evacuation would be the right thing to do.

Even if we had some time to do that, we weren't really certain about anything. The problem was that we weren't in Lindel. Everything had a procedure, and Elias was the decision maker in the kingdom. He had the final say, not Jo Hye-Jin. Actually…

'Are we supposed to let it explode?'

I started thinking that Lee Ji-Hye wouldn't go so far as to let that explode, as this method was different from her usual way of doing things.

There was no way she was ready yet, so how was I supposed to understand this situation? An entire kingdom was about to explode, after all.

What she had done was tantamount to exposing her organization to the continent and a declaration of war as well. However, it wasn't realistic at all. It'd be more realistic to say that Jung Ha-Yan had fabricated all this. As expected, Jung Ha-Yan smiled brightly instead of being nervous even though the entire Everia was in danger.

- I think it’s best to hear the details in front of the World Tree.

- Shall we do that? Please take your time. I’ll need to prepare a few things.

- Thank you for your hard work, Miss Jung-Yeon, Miss Ha-Yan, and Miss Sora.

Perhaps Jung Ha-Yan had put the Everia Kingdom in this threatening situation so that she could become the hero who would stop it. After all, she'd obtain holy power that way. Wait, was that even a decent assumption?

While I was deep in my thoughts, the meeting ended. Obviously, Jo Hye-Jin looked really worried, and she was thinking about how she was supposed to process this information.

- What should we do?

“I’m not sure. I honestly didn’t think such extreme methods would be used… I think we should keep an eye on it for a few hours. Ha-Yan is right; we still have some time left…

"*Ah*, we should notify Elias first. You don’t need to tell him yourself. Letting Elena tell him is the best way. Let’s head out for now. I think I should check out the World Tree first,” I suggested.

- Wouldn’t it be better to evacuate everyone?

“Elias and Elena will take care of that. Didn’t I tell you that we need to find other clues? Things will only become more chaotic if we attempt to take control of everything here. I’m sure Everia has a manual for emergencies, so let’s let them handle it. We're just going to do what we came here to do,” I replied.

- Okay.

Jung Ha-Yan stood in front of the hideous-looking tree and started her explanation. She carefully carved out a piece of the World Tree and placed it inside a circular array. Then, she said words I couldn't quite understand.

"If the two opposing forces are allowed… to keep on colliding, then it'll e-explode… l-like this…"

Boooom!

The tiny piece of the World Tree exploded, and the circular array shattered.

'You're not the one behind this, right?'

- T-T-The magic inside here is high in purity… so the collision point… v-varies… This is why… I-I said three days. It's not dangerous right now, but… if it receives a strong external impact, then… it'll go… *boom!*

"Ask questions," I told her.

- Is there a way to see where the mana inside the World Tree is coming from?

Jung Ha-Yan shook her head.

- Is there any way for us to know what the people who had come here had done during their visit?

It seemed that she couldn't answer that either. However, she started channeling a spell. It was a spell with a long channeling time, and she raised her voice once she was done, casting it at once.

Han Sora and Hwang Jung-Yeon looked at her in awe.

The next moment, transparent shadows appeared around Jung Ha-Yan.

-…

The shadows moved and started doing things I couldn't quite understand. A small shadow was jumping around, while a large shadow was floating in the air.

Actually, they weren’t floating. If the World Tree were still intact, this was probably what the elves would look like while spending their time on the tree branch. I was looking at…

- T-The past…

‘Are you serious? You’re capable of doing this too?’

I knew she was like a monster, but I started Jung Ha-Yan in a different light. Han Sora and the others were in disbelief as well. It wasn't strange that she’d master this type of spell, as she was an expert in stalking spells, after all. However, who could have known that she’d cast such an unrealistic spell?

Shit, it wasn't really that strange, as she could teleport and manipulate gravity.

- It’s amazing… Miss Jung Ha-Yan.

- Y-Y-You can do it too, Sora. The mana floating in the air will guide you. W-whenever a person moves, t-they'll inadvertently disturb the invisible mana in the air. T-They usually leave about a week's worth of mana traces. You’re a g-genius too, Sora.

-…

- I-It’s difficult in the beginning, b-but it’s easy… and simple…

Geniuses who make such comments were often called liars. Unfortunately, Jung Ha-Yan's effort wasn’t enough for us to know what was going on.

How could we differentiate the hundreds and thousands of shadows that had surrounded the World Tree? The shadows soon dispersed, and I reckoned that was the point where the World Tree fell apart.

The shadows were frightened; they screamed and ran away from the World Tree.

They were just transparent shadows, but it was so chaotic that I was convinced of just how chaotic things were when the World Tree had just collapsed.

“Wait, go back,” I instructed.

- P-Please go back…

There was one shadow that was walking casually among the shadows.

“Go back more…” I said.

- Go back more…

While the shadows were scattering in every direction, I saw a shadow walking quietly toward the World Tree.

Their arms were spread wide open as well.

- Can you go back to the beginning, Miss Jung Ha-Yan?

The transparent shadow was whispering something. I couldn't hear it, but the shape of its mouth was changing. Soon, the shadows that had run away returned as Jung Ha-Yan reversed the playback.

The shadow that touched the World Tree joined the other shadows and started walking away. I was curious about where the shadow was going so I followed her, but traces of the shadow had vanished for some reason. The shadow was last seen at the accommodation of the detained visitors, but it was empty at the time.

“Shit…” I mumbled.

I heard a loud noise just then.

- *Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!*

- Don’t hold it in any longer! How long are we going to allow these dirty elves to keep us imprisoned like this?!

- Drive them out! Let’s drive them out!

- My comrades, let’s get out of here! Let’s get out of this birdcage!

- Let’s move! Grab a weapon! Let us show them the power of mankind!

- Please follow the rules! Follow the… *Cough…*

- We’ll use force if you don’t follow the rules!

- Bullshit. Fuck you, you bastards! *Hahahaha!*

- Stop them! Stop them! Don’t let them escape! Stop them!

- You fuckin’ bastards! *Hahaha! Mwahaha! Hahaha!!!*

- Go get Mr. Elias!

- Evacuate the people!

- You dirty bastards… *Haa… haa…* I’ll tear apart all these elf bastards!

Jo Hye-Jin bit her lips as she heard voices from all directions.

- Prepare for battle! Prepare for battle!

Ahn Ki-Mo and Alps, who were nearby, grabbed their weapons and joined Jo Hye-Jin.

Jo Hye-Jin gave orders while moving quickly.

- The safety of the people is our top priority…

- Okay.

- Yes, ma’am.

The crazy bastards who had grabbed their weapons and decided to riot made me think that they were all in a hurry to die. However, I realized that they weren't doing all of this intentionally when I saw their glazed eyes and empty gazes.

- *Ahh…* O Goddess! Our Goddess!

‘Shit, what’s going on… What the hell… ’

- I'll lay down my life and everything I have for you! I will lay everything down for you! *Aaaahh! Aaaaahhhh!*

‘Shit… this is fuckin’ scary. This is… ’

- O Goddess! My Goddess!!! We! We!!! Offer their blood to you! My Goddess!!!

Aaahhh! Aaaaaaaaaahhhh!!!

'Shit, I'm scared. Damn it… damn it… '

- It's the World Tree! The goddess is inside the World Tree! She's in there!!! *Aaaahhh! Aaaaaaaaahhhh! Hahahaha!!!*

'What the heck? Shit… '

- Prepare for battle!

"Prepare for battle, my ass! Stop it with the bullshit and run, Hye-Jin! Damn it!" I shouted.

CHAPTER 791
THE LAST (24)

- We can't let them get near the World Tree!

"No! Shit," I shouted.

- Miss Ha-Yan!

"Don't let Jung Ha-Yan cast any other spells! Teleport! Tell her to cast Teleport! Move everyone away from here. Move the elves as well! Don't cast any other spells! Don't let her do it!" I ordered.

- Miss Ha-Yan! Now!

"Listen to me, Hye-Jin. Listen. Ha-Yan doesn't have to fight, so let her finish her spell," I instructed.

Jo Hye-Jin nodded while biting her lips. She didn't seem to understand, but she immediately instructed Jung Ha-Yan to cast Teleport.

She removed the fabric that was wrapped around her spear and fought the crazy bastards charging at her.

A crazy bastard collapsed upon getting stabbed, but the way the crazy bastard kept on moving even after getting stabbed in his chest reminded me of a phenomenon I had seen before. Although there was a huge difference…

'Could they be an organization from the Republic? Are they being influenced by a demon?'

The biggest difference was their eyes because they obviously looked like they had gotten brainwashed. Actually, I didn't even have to look at their eyes to notice that. It was pretty obvious from the words that they were screaming.

- The goddess is inside the World Tree! *Hahaha!!! Aaaahhhh! Aaaahhh!!!*

- Let’s go! Let’s go!

- With blood and pain! *Aaaahhh!*

- Liberate everything! Liberation!

They couldn’t speak properly and were screaming out bullshit while drooling. The way they moved was definitely reminiscent of a lunatic. The bastards shouting while heading toward the World Tree looked like lunatics, and the situation was pure madness.

Those unaffected were confused by the sudden chaos.

Meanwhile, smoke started rising everywhere, and I heard the sound of metal clashing against metal. The way the shocked elves screamed and moved reminded me of the first time the World Tree was destroyed. The chaotic situation was happening in the middle of a peaceful city rather than in the north where the recent war had taken place.

‘Are they the enemy? Should we be fighting them?’

I was sure some were questioning that because their opponents were humans that Everia had detained.

- Get into formation! Get into a square formation!

‘Good job, Hye-Jin.’

- Focus! This is an actual battle! Just move based on your training and what you've learned in the manual!

I was relieved that Jo Hye-Jin’s voice helped some of the soldiers come back to their senses, but I was honestly not sure if these elves were in the right mind while fighting.

The elves had emerged victorious in the recent battle against the demons wearing angel masks, but fear was written on their faces.

‘Oh my gosh… ’

They were afraid because they couldn't understand the situation with their common sense. They were horror-stricken because they had to face pure madness and evil. The soldiers attacked while biting their lips, but…

"*Aaaahhhh! Aaaaahhhh! Aaaaahhhhh!*"

The soldiers' faces turned dark as they moved randomly while screaming. They might be thinking that fighting the demons wearing angel masks was a lot better. Shit, even I was scared, so I was sure that they were more scared than me.

The commanders came back to their senses and commanded their troops. I saw two types of troops. One group was trying to protect the elves of the kingdom, while the others gathered around the World Tree at Jo Hye-Jin's command.

I couldn't say that it was a relief, as these crazy bastards were focused solely on the World Tree. It was a good thing, as the non-combatants could be protected. The casualties could be minimized at the very least.

'Shit… shit… minimizing is all we're doing though.'

- It's the goddess! The goddess is with us!

- Don't retreat! Heroes! Remember the battles we've fought! Don't retreat no matter what! They're the group that sold their souls to the demon! We can overcome this again!

- Die! Die! They're blocking the path toward the goddess! Kill them all! *Hahaha! Hahahaha!* Our sacrifice and blood will make the goddess happy!

- Elune is with us! Mr. Lee Ki-Young will give us strength!

'I'm not really giving anyone strength, but thanks for mentioning me, anyway.'

- He will watch over us!

'I am watching.'

- The hero of the continent is beside us!

Jo Hye-Jin looked around the chaotic battlefield and started moving.

- What's going on? What do they mean by the goddess being inside the World Tree?

There was no way that was true.

"What Ha-Yan said earlier…" I said.

- About how the World Tree will explode once it receives a strong external impact? So what Goddess are they talking about?

"Goddess, my ass! The World Tree is a bomb, and those bastards are the detonators. They received a message to head to the World Tree. They've been completely brainwashed.

"They really don't have to go that far since they have Lee Ji-Hye… We don't have time for this. Ahn Ki-Mo and Han Sora should stick with Ha-Yan. Miss Hye-Jin…" I paused.

'Shit… '

"I'm asking just in case, but you did tell her to cast her spell, right?" I asked.

- Yes, I instructed her just like you asked. She said it might take some time, though.

"Have you instructed Elena to cast a protection spell around the World Tree?" I questioned.

- I'll tell her now.

"Then…"

- Sub Guild Master, I'm sorry, but when you said they were being brainwashed…

"I'm sure it's part of Lee Ji-Hye's plan," I told her.

-…

"I'd like to explain everything to you, but… I need time to think as well. Hold on," I said.

'How long do we have to wait until Ha-Yan finishes her spell?'

It was probably going to take longer than I thought since the task required her to teleport away every single elf in the kingdom.

'Is Lee Ji-Hye still here?'

It was highly likely that she had already left, but this was too good of a sight for her to just leave.

"Bring Alps, Hye-Jin. Alps… Hurry," I instructed.

- Alps!

- Y-Yes, ma'am!

"Find Lee Ji-Hye! Tell her to find her!" I shouted.

Jo Hye-Jin took out the scarf that Lee Ji-Hye always wore around her neck.

- Think you can find her?

- I-I'll try! Shiro!

- *Aaaahhhhhh!*

- Careful!

Jo Hye-Jin pulled Alps closer to her and thrust her spear toward the attacker. It looked like a scene straight out of a movie, but I didn't have time to keep watching her. Shiro had to have understood my intentions because he immediately started running away.

- This way!

'Shit. We can stop it, right? We can stop her without Hye-Jin, right?'

It was possible. Jung Ha-Yan was excluded from the fight, but the Blue Guild was strong enough even without her. The combat power and regenerative power of the crazy bastards had increased, but…

'We're stronger.'

The Blue Guild and the elven soldiers had undergone intense training, after all.

Elena cast her spells everywhere, and her extremely pure holy power was suitable for those with high regenerative powers. Fallen allies got up in an instant, and those who were dying took up their swords once more.

Ahn Ki-Mo was doing the same. He was casting spells at a wide area, but he didn't take his eyes off of Jung Ha-Yan, making him a really reliable ally off tank.

He was holding a shield and sword by himself while casting buffs. He took out every single oncoming crazy bastard, and he even cast protection magic on Jung Ha-Yan. He was really great in situations like this. He wasn't as good as Park Deok-Gu, who had gotten really strong, but he was good enough to become the main tank.

'He's a talented man.'

Hwang Jung-Yeon became the control tower, providing necessary information to everyone using Anemone's Eyes.

Meanwhile, Han Sora was looking around while supporting Ahn Ki-Mo. The few elves who had come back to their senses maintained the formation and were driving out the enemy. There were some parts in their defense that looked unstable, but…

'I'm sure we can take care of this.'

Even if something untoward were to happen, at least nothing serious would happen until Jo Hye-Jin was back.

- Over here!

Jo Hye-Jin and Alps were still moving. I wasn't sure how far Shiro could track Ji-Hye noona, but he was running in a hurry as if he had caught her scent.

'Is she really still in Everia?'

Actually, it was fine even if Shiro failed.

A trace of her was more than enough because that small clue could be used for many things.

'Please, Shiro. I know you can do it. You can run faster, right? That's a good Shiro. You can do it!'

I really wanted to turn Shiro into Tactical Shiro because he was actually useful.

- Over here! Miss Jo Hye-Jin! Shiro, is this the place?

- *Woof!*

- I'm coming.

They soon found themselves in a building with no crazy bastards. There wasn't anyone in the building, but after a brief exploration, they eventually saw two figures in the distance

'Is that her?'

I wasn't certain, but I saw a masked woman and someone kissing her shoe…

'Elias?'

Damn it. He was definitely a weirdo, and his *love* was so worthless that it seemed like he had never shown any interest in Jo Hye-Jin just a few hours earlier.

I thought he was brainwashed, but if he were truly in love with Jo Hye-Jin—shit, people weren't supposed to pledge their loyalty to anyone except for the person they loved.

'Hye-Jin, do you see this? That bastard isn't the one for you.'

- Miss Ji-Hye?

-…

- Miss Ji-Hye!

-…

The masked woman raised her hands, and a black veil shrouded them.

Jo Hye-Jin ran toward them. She tried to grab them, but she caught nothing but the air.

Alps stood frozen and stared blankly at the scene.

Meanwhile, the slow-witted Shiro just barked.

'It's fine. This is good.'

I was satisfied with the fact that we managed to get something out of this.

"Hold yourself together and tell Ha-Yan to cast Teleport," I instructed.

-…

"Hye-Jin. Send a message to Ha-Yan," I repeated.

- *Ah*… okay…

"Let's get moving," I said.

- Right… now?

"Forget about the battle and just teleport away. There's a reason why the elves are being evacuated," I said.

-…

Jo Hye-Jin looked puzzled as she looked out the window. She was questioning whether it was necessary to teleport away. After all, they were handling the situation pretty well…

"It'll blow up even if we don't leave it alone, so let's just teleport away," I told her.

-…

It was then…

BOOM!

Jo Hye-Jin trembled while staring blankly at Everia.

I was sure she was trembling at Lee Ji-Hye's cruelty.

CHAPTER 792
THE LAST (25)

[The Downfall of the Everia Kingdom. The New Threat Is Making the Continent Tremble in Fear. - Reporter Kim Sung-Kyeong of Lindel Daily.]

[What is the Continental Protection Management Committee Doing? Committee Accused of Incompetence After the Disappearance of Lee Ki-Young, the Former Chairman. - Reporter Kim Sung-Kyeong of Lindel Daily.]

[What Happened There On That Day? The Horrors of That Day Heard From the Survivors. - Reporter Merlia of the Democratic Newspaper.]

[Elena of the Blue Guild Has Officially Left the Guild. No Conflict With the Guild Members. A Decision Made to Help the Elves Who Lost Their Kingdom. - Reporter Cheon Wi of the Dawan Daily.]

[Whereabouts of the Sunset Swordsman Unknown… Blue Guild Dismisses the Rumors About His Retirement. However… - Reporter Kim Sung-Kyeong of Lindel Daily.]

[Has the Sunset Warrior Truly Abandoned the Continent? His Incomprehensible Behavior and Travels. He's Still Shocked by Father Lee Ki-Young's Death, But… - Continental News]

[He Must Overcome His Sadness NOW. Denizens of the Continent Are Waiting for the Sunset Swordsman… - Reporter Merlia of the Democratic Newspaper.]

The news about Everia's downfall had shocked the continent. The media seemed to have been waiting for something like this, and they immediately started their investigation into the truth. As expected, many people were anxious.

If I were to exaggerate a bit, it was more chaotic than the Day of Judgment.

Honestly, this situation wasn't anything new.

Unfortunately, this incident was actually more terrifying to everyone on the continent compared to the previous war against the Outer God. After all, the war against the Outer God covered only the northern region. The people in the southern, eastern, and western regions of the continent weren't exactly affected by it.

Of course, I wasn't speaking ill of them, but I was sure everyone on the continent would experience more or less the same level of fear during this incident.

'Shit. Everia has just disappeared from the map.'

The adventurers were looking at this situation in a different light, but…

'The non-combatants are different from them.'

The non-combatants couldn't do anything other than express their fears. They started finding ways to help through their own methods. They either demanded information from the media or exchanged information that had yet to be released to the public. Most of them seemed like useless work, but the problem was that I couldn't ignore their efforts.

Of course, personal and public opinion were completely different from each other.

To make matters worse, A few groups were taking advantage of the situation in a malicious way.

"So they want to get rid of the people they were sick of seeing," I said.

-…

"Why do you keep reading the articles?" I asked.

- I'm just… looking at them. I think I understand why you wanted to exclude the guild master from this.

"What?" I asked.

- I knew he was carrying a heavy burden, but I didn't know how much burden he had been carrying while fighting… I never knew…

"…"

- There are more articles about the guild master than the Everia Kingdom that disappeared from the map. There are malicious articles. Of course, they're not overstepping their boundaries, and they're sugarcoating it as well, but it doesn't change the fact that they're criticizing him.

"Yes, well…"

- I mean, if criticizing him wasn't their intention, then they shouldn't deny the fact that they're cornering him. They don't know how hard it was for him to pick up his sword again… They don't understand how cruel it is to take him to go to the front lines again. I can't believe they're handling this politically…

'I didn't really exclude him for that particular reason… '

- I understand why Miss Ji-Hye made that decision.

'Don't think about that. It's a bit too much when Hyun-Sung acts sweet, but it's even worse when Hye-Jin acts sweet… '

"Don't try to understand Lee Ji-Hye. Why are you trying to understand the person who had destroyed an entire kingdom? You just need to do your job. The situation isn't actually that bad," I told her.

- How can you say the situation isn't that bad? Mr. Elias' whereabouts are still unknown. Miss Ji-Hye has been brainwashed by a demon after making one wrong decision. I'm sure… she's still fighting a difficult fight.

'I'm sure it's not that difficult.'

- If a part of her is still within her… I'm sure she's feeling guilty about the things she did… I just can't imagine the pain she's going through.

I was sure that she didn't really feel guilty about it.

- What… should I do…

'I think you're the one feeling guilty here… '

I was sure Jo Hye-Jin was feeling bothered about everything, and I would feel the same way if I were in her position. Lee Ji-Hye had sold herself to a demon, and her

actions shocked Jo Hye-Jin.

Moreover, Jo Hye-Jin had many official and unofficial tasks she needed to handle such as Elena's departure from the guild. She still had to respond to the media as well as handle a variety of guild-related tasks.

If it weren't for my help, the guild would have stopped functioning long ago. Jo Hye-Jin was in so much shock that she was rationalizing it by believing the words of thos crazy bastards in the Everia Kingdom. It would be safe to say that Jo Hye-Jin was in the worst position both financially and politically.

'I've memorized the faces of those bastards, damn it.'

Those scummy bastards who were hostile toward the Blue Guild and the bastards who had decided to escape because they didn't want to be on a sinking ship. I had memorized their faces.

- I'm really embarrassed to tell you this, but just having you here is enough to comfort me.

"It's nothing to be embarrassed about. As I mentioned, the situation might not be *that* bad," I said.

- What?

"It's difficult to explain in detail, but I think we should consider the possibility that Miss Ji-Hye is still a bit sane," I told her.

- That's…

"She might have understood my current situation and is trying to help me…" I added.

- What do you mean?

"The chances of that being true are low. It's an undeniable fact that the continent is collapsing, but ironically, this entire situation works for me in a good way. It would probably be easier to understand if I told you that there are a lot more people searching for god.

"It's the same for all those people looking for Mr. Hyun-Sung. Haven't I told you that I

require an immense amount of holy power to return?" I asked.

- No and I'm honestly having a hard time understanding what you're saying right now.

"Just keep in mind that Miss Ji-Hye is still holding onto her consciousness despite the fact that her soul has already been taken away by a demon," I said.

'This isn't how Ji-Hye noona does things.'

There was a high chance Ji-Hye noona was behind this, so I leaned more toward the possibility that she did all this because she had been brainwashed. No matter how hard I thought about it, this wasn't the way she handled things. After all, she was a snake.

The recent incident was more reminiscent of myself. After all, I was the type to blow things out of proportion through bluffs and then draw everyone's attention using an impactful event.

Lee Ji-Hye was the type to remain discreet. Then, she'd strangle and suffocate her targets after getting close enough to them without the latter knowing. If Ji-Hye noona wanted to take care of this properly, she wouldn't have made such a big incident

The continent wouldn't know that they were getting strangled and would sink from suffocation. It'd be a different story if she were a romanticist who had decided to put herself in my shoes and avenge me using my own methods.

However, she was the type to use logic over her emotions.

'She's also refusing to communicate with me.'

She was avoiding contact so much that it seemed intentional. If my assumption was correct, then it was probably to avoid Lucifer's eyes.

I had obtained information from Everia's destruction.

Jung Ha-Yan had discovered a portal, and she was investigating that portal at the moment. I also discovered that there were some traces of a connection between Lee Ji-Hye and Lucifer.

I had obtained a ton of holy power, but I had to focus the most on the traces of a connection between Lee Ji-Hye and Lucifer.

'Maybe she already knows.'

If Lee Ji-Hye was avoiding me intentionally to fool Lucifer and backstab her rather than me, then… Lee Ji-Hye definitely knew the details of the bet, or she knew something related to the bet.

"Of course, these are simply assumptions. She could just be taking out her anger by killing humans. The fact that we're sitting here like this and making assumptions might also be part of her plan. I think she's preparing to turn the tables and stab someone in the back, but…" I paused.

- Yes?

"I don't think Ji-Hye noona is doing these things because the demon wants her to do so," I continued.

- I-I think so too because she's a strong person. Even when the Soul Stealer stole her soul… she managed to overcome it and retrieve her soul again.

'Soul Stealer… shit.'

"I think we should take our time deciding our next move. We need to see if she's doing all of these things for us or if she has completely become our enemy," I said.

- It'll definitely be the former.

"You can't speak in absolutes. It could end up being the latter, after all. We'll end up in a bad ending if we think that wa, you know?" I warned her.

- I trust Miss Ji-Hye.

"I trust her a bit, but our task right now is to find the other end of the portal that Lee Ji-Hye had used," I said.

- Okay.

"And achieving a satisfactory result in the meeting you're about to attend," I added.

- I’m aware.

“So stop looking at the articles and let’s move,” I ordered.

-…

“They're waiting, so go ahead," I said.

- Okay.

Jo Hye-Jin seemed kind of nervous as she stood up.

She opened the door and saw Alps, who had decided to attend as her attendant.

The rookie guild member cast a worried gaze at Jo Hye-Jin, and she followed her from half a step behind. Alps was pretty much aware of what was going on, so she knew that this meeting was going to be a difficult one.

- Miss Jo Hye-Jin, the acting guild master of the Blue Guild has arrived!

Jo Hye-Jin walked inside and saw people frowning at her. They were obviously being hostile toward her because they were glaring at her as she sat down.

- Is the Sunset Swordsman very busy?

- The guild master is currently focused on other tasks.

- *Ahem*… My goodness…

-…

- I don’t know what he’s up to, but it must be a very important task. The Everia Kingdom has fallen. It has completely disappeared from the map. The continent is in danger, and this so-called Sunset Swordsman is completely ignoring it… *Ha*… *Jeez*…

- Excuse me! How dare you say such absurd words about the hero who saved the continent?!

- I’m saying this *because* he’s the hero who saved the continent! We don’t even know where Mr. Elias is right now. We need all the help we can get right now. Don’t you

agree? The Blue Guild must not be really interested in this incident.

- Watch what you say… Even birds and beasts don't forget about grace. It's because the Blue Guild was there that—

- The Blue Guild isn't the only one who saved the continent from danger. Everyone on the continent joined hands, and that was why we managed to achieve victory in that holy war. This is the same situation. The entire continent must join hands and overcome this crisis as well. But look what's going on. Have you guys forgotten why Mr. Lee Ki-Young created the Continental Protection Management Committee in the first place?!

'Look at this bastard using my name.'

- The Mercenary Queen didn't participate as well. It's not just the Sunset Swordsman. This is precisely the reason why I insisted on creating a stronger regulatory organization that will inherit the spirit of the Continental Protection Management Committee and the will of Father Lee Ki-Young.

'…'

- The time has come when we must join hands again, everyone.

There was a saying that went, "When the cat's away, the mice will play."

I had an inkling as to what these bastards were trying to do.

'You guys aren't thinking about controlling Hyun-Sung, right? You fuckin' bastards.'

My smile disappeared…

'So you want to challenge the Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung. Is that it?'

And I felt annoyed…

CHAPTER 793
THE LAST (26)

'They're crazy. Fuckin' bastards... Those scums.'

These bastards had no idea what was going on, and they were mumbling something I couldn't hear as I started tapping my thigh unknowingly.

I had seen many crazy bastards doing crazy things, but it had been a while since I felt *this* annoyed. For a moment, I thought Boss Ji-Hye had decided to make the right decision

I looked around and saw Seraphim standing with a cup of coffee.

"Father," Seraphim said.

"I'm not your father," I told him.

"I did as you asked," he said.

I was so annoyed that I didn't have any strength in my hands, and I almost dropped the cup of coffee.

"I'll bring another—"

"Go away, Seraphim," I interrupted.

- We must join hands and protect the continent. This is Father Lee Ki-Young's will when he was still alive.

What truly ground my gears was the fact that these bastards were using my name.

I knew what these bastards were thinking. I knew where that crazy thought of theirs had come from as well as why they were behaving this way.

They were probably thinking that they could tempt a few innocent bastards and

control them, but they couldn't guarantee it, so they were probably just taking chances.

Those with power were the most afraid of losing control, and it wasn't that difficult to deduce. These bastards were afraid of not having any control over the situation.

I suddenly realized that I was hating on people who were like me, but those with power usually hated those with power like them.

I wondered what they thought about the powerful adventurers that they hadn't been able to control. Could they really just stand there and watch as people like Kim Hyun-Sung, Cha Hee-Ra, Jung Ha-Yan, Rafael, and other adventurers run around the place?

What did they think about those monsters capable of fighting a city or an entire nation with their own strength?

There was a reason behind the existence of the cliche about the hero swordsman getting abandoned after defeating the demon king.

The heroes were the most reliable allies in danger, but during peaceful times, those heroes would look like bombs that could explode easily.

They were worried that these monsters would take away their rights, retaliate, obtain political influence, or even destroy the peaceful society.

Now that I thought about it, I felt like I was starting to understand the existence of the ascension system, which allowed those adventurers whose strength had transcended humanity to ascend up above, but…

'We're in a transitional period right now.'

We still needed to prepare a lot of things for them to ascend.

In other words, they had no choice but to deal with the humans down below right now.

- We need to establish something stronger than before. The Continental Protection Management Committee will go through many changes, but I believe they're meaningful changes. Think about how we managed to win that long and difficult fight. Wasn't it because the continent became one?

-…

- You're right. It's because Father Lee Ki-Young had brought us all together; he was truly a saint.

He could flatter me forever, and I would never smile.

- The hero who brought us together is no longer with us. We must find a new solution. We must come up with something that would allow the Other races, the Republic, the Sacred Democratic Country, the neutral nations, the Union of Kingdoms, and the heroes of the continent to join hands. This is an inevitable decision that we cannot ignore.

- But…

- Yes?

- It's true that it's a very good suggestion since the continent is currently facing a great crisis, but do you really think that the heroes will work with us? Even if we hold meetings like this, they—

- They probably will since this isn't what we want. We simply represent all the races and denizens on this continent. This is what the denizens want, and I believe our heroes won't deny their call for help.

'Where the hell did that bastard come from?'

Transcendent beings were social animals as well, and that was a fact that would never change.

I stared at the man standing at the helm of the meeting, and he looked as if he had never been in the sun before. He was feeble as well, and the way he talked sounded so annoying to me that I couldn't stand it.

Was this what Lee Seol-Ho of the Blue Guild felt when he first saw me?

I finally understood why that narrow-minded old man looked at me as if I were so disgusting.

'Where is he from?'

I examined him with Mind's Eye and saw that he had a Korean name.

'But why is he there? Is he not from Lindel?'

I had never seen him before, so he probably never got involved in politics until now.

I honestly never knew that he existed before the war, so it was highly likely that he joined recently. In other words, he was just a rookie in this meeting.

'Is he part of an up-and-coming guild? Or does he have connections with the ruler of a nation? Why the hell is he even there?'

"Who's that?" I asked.

- That's Song Soo-Kyung, the Guild Master of the Union Guild. He's from the Union of Kingdoms.

"He's Korean. He isn't from Lindel?" I questioned.

- He was in Lindel after the tutorial dungeon, but he transferred to the Union of Kingdoms. After the war—no, after you died, he started making a name for himself. I heard that the Mehran Kingdom had bestowed upon him a title. It's true that the Union Kingdom is a strong and stable guild, but—

"He's not that influential to be invited to this meeting, right? The Mehran Kingdom gave him the entrance ticket to this meeting," I said.

- That's about it.

'He's a very greedy man.'

Song Soo-Kyung's nature was Hidden Analyst. If his current behavior was his true colors, then it was obvious why he decided to transfer to the Union of Kingdoms.

'He probably thought that it was going to be difficult for him to achieve his dreams in Lindel.'

The Sacred Democratic Country already had three large guilds, so it would be difficult for new guilds or a rookie to climb up the ranks.

Song Soo-Kyung probably believed that he would have an easier time achieving his dreams by going to a new place. In the end, his gamble ended up paying off, and it was proven by the fact that he was in this meeting right now.

The Mehran Kingdom had bestowed upon him a title, and his guild was pretty stable as well. Moreover, I couldn't imagine how proud he felt when he received news that he'd be in a room full of powerful and influential people.

I didn't want to acknowledge it, but I nodded at his great insight.

After all, I knew very well just how hard it was to come all this way from nothing.

He was probably active even while I was still alive, but…

'Maybe he thought it would be dangerous if I noticed him.'

He had probably been hiding himself, waiting for the right moment to start taking the lead. My death was probably the golden opportunity for him to make a move, so he used everything he had built up to make a name for himself.

As a result…

- There are many people who say they can see the sub guild master and let's not get started about what they're saying… I heard they're simply filling his spot. I don't really agree, but…

'Shit, I knew it was going to turn out like this.'

It had already been decided. Everyone seemed to have already voted for him except for a few people from the Sacred Democratic Country's side—no, they had already voted for him.

Oscar and Pristina sitting nearby didn't look so happy, so I assumed that they had failed to achieve decent results in the political fight that I didn't get to see.

It was the same for the Republic and the Other races.

The fraudster's cunning tongue was swaying them.

- It's a ridiculous proposal.

'Yeah, even I think it's ridiculous.'

- Think about the denizens trembling in fear, Miss Oscar. The previous Continental Protection Management Committee has already lost its credibility. What were they doing when Everia collapsed? How can you say that it's wrong of us to create a foundation the denizens can rely on?

- I'm not blaming the Committee. I'm telling you that your method is wrong. Every human being should be free, which also applies to the heroes who saved the continent.

- Great power comes with great responsibility. We all know this famous saying. Basically, I'm not trying to take away the heroes' freedom. Who could possibly order them around?

-…

- Who could oppress and control them? Think about it, Oscar. Even Mr. Lee Ki-Young couldn't control them. We just want to deliver the wishes of the denizens to the heroes. We're not trying to give orders. We'll just give suggestions and take action so that they can move freely. It's all so that they won't have any issues fighting for the continent. I said this earlier, but we simply represent the denizens.

- It sounds like you're saying you want to control them using the people… I'll have to think again whether this plan is good or not.

- We don't have time, Oscar. What should we do if the incident in Everia happens to us?

-…

- We need a new Committee that has inherited the teachings of the Continental Protection Management Committee. I would like to introduce the *new* Continental Protection Management Committee to all of you.

Song Soo-Kyung walked down the podium slowly.

'Haa… shit.'

Everyone applauded. However, some of them were worried that they were making a

mistake. Those who had gotten a taste of Doom Hyun-Sung's power looked nervous, but it seemed that they believed that we truly needed a revamped Continental Protection Management Committee.

Song Soo-Kyung played a video he had prepared on the Goddess' Mirror, and I honestly couldn't tell the difference.

A few things that were different were the people on the Committee.

The members were no longer made up of people from the Sacred Democratic Country and Laios. The Committee was now made up of people from the Republic and the Union of Kingdoms. Of course, there were a few people from the Sacred Democratic Country for the sake of balance, but this was nothing more than a ploy to get more people from many different nations to join their cause.

Realistically, those scummy bastards had all the power and authority. Oscar and the guild masters of Lindel were frowning because Song Soo-Kyung had basically said that they were going to exclude the Sacred Democratic Country completely as part of the upper echelon.

'Damn it. I didn't invest in the continent so that these bastards could live a good life. I invested so that my babies would live a good life.'

A thunderous applause broke out.

- The continent will be one again. The new continent will be safe forever.

There was another cheer, and I saw the list of the heroes who would be under the *new* Continental Protection Management Committee.

Sunset Swordsman Kim Hyun-Sung.

Archmage Jung Ha-Yan.

Mercenary Queen Cha Hee-Ra.

Gray Warrior Rafael.

And…

Holy Spear Jo Hye-Jin.

It included both the Five Tiger Generals of the Republic, the Eight Seats, and the most powerful heroes of the continent.

'You want to use Hyun-Sung just because you can use the Five Tiger Generals or whatever? Do you really think that's a decent trade? You're basically trading corn for diamonds, you bastards.'

- Let's go to the new future. Let's protect the continent that Father Lee Ki-Young wanted to protect one more time. Let's show Father Lee Ki-Young, who has become a god of the continent, that we can protect the continent even without him!

The people applauded nonstop.

'So you're going to try without me… '

They applauded until the meeting ended.

Jo Hye-Jin was frowning the whole time.

A few people were already talking among themselves, and the bastard walked up to Jo Hye-Jin with a smile. The continent was in danger, but he looked a little too happy about it.

I honestly couldn't tell whether this scum truly wanted to protect the continent or not.

- I apologize if today's meeting was a bit disrespectful, Miss Jo Hye-Jin.

-…

- You can resent me all you want, but please understand that this decision was made for the continent. The people want peace. I understand that the Guild Master of the Blue Guild is going through a difficult time, but… he needs to get back on his feet.

-…

- If it's not too much trouble, can you tell me where he is right now?

- I don’t know what you want, but I’ll deliver your message to him.

The bastard laughed.

- I don’t really have any other business with him. I just think that it's my duty to meet him myself and explain to him what we discussed today. He did lose many things.

-…

- He had lost his soulmate, a comrade, and a brother at the same time, so I’m sure that he’s *really* heartbroken. But maybe…

-…

- Maybe… I can fill Father Lee Ki-Young’s empty spot.

-…

-…

“All right, fine. I want to see the continent's destruction as well. Let’s see how far you can take this, you bastard,” I cursed.

-…

“Let’s see how well you can do without me…”

CHAPTER 794
THE LAST (27)

- I heard there's a disease spreading in the big city of the Republic; there's also an increase in mysterious disappearances throughout the Union of Kingdoms.

"Why do you even care about those things? This isn't the first time a disease broke out and cases of people going missing happens often. I'm sure they're inside a dungeon or something, so don't even worry about it.

- We also received reports from people that they've seen the masked people.

"*Ah*, so it's time for them to start making a move. More importantly, how's the portal Ha-Yan is investigating going? I want to know if there's a way to track it… Please look into that. I'm sure she'll do fine, but let me know if she needs help with anything. As of right now, the best thing we can do right now is track the portal Lee Ji-Hye had used to disappear…" I explained.

-…

"…"

- What are you doing right now?

"I'm just doing my job. Didn't I give you the Sacred Democratic Country Defense Plan?" I asked.

- You know that's not what I was asking. I know… *whoo*… you're sad right now…

"…"

- I know you're dissatisfied with the fact that everything you've built is changing or disappearing little by little. I don't like all the changes either, but the plan hasn't been decided yet.

"I'm not a little kid, you know… It's not because of that. I mean, what can I do when

I'm no longer part of this world? Is there a reason I should be annoyed when amazing and talented people have volunteered to protect the continent? I just thought it wouldn't be so bad to leave it to other people aside from the Sacred Democratic Country and Lindel. It's called dividing the work. Strong teamwork should be the priority," I explained.

- If that's how you really feel, then you shouldn't be interfering.

"What do you mean? I'm not interfering," I said.

- Can you stop the statue from crying blood? You know people are getting anxious because of that.

"I'm helping, not interfering. I just gave the continent a warning—a warning that they're in big trouble. No other god is as caring as me. Benigoa is sitting idly by while Varian and the other gods are doing basically nothing. I just thought I had to notify them that the continent is in danger," I told her.

- You could've used other methods.

"I'm just doing my job."

-…

'These cocky bastards need to be taught a lesson so they'll know the difference between gold and trash.'

Boss Jo Hye-Jin was right.

The situation was so absurd that if I had a fleshly body, I would have immediately become Doom Ki-Young and rushed at them.

Even more annoying was the fact that these bastards were actually doing a pretty stable job managing the continent. Of course, they didn't have the authority to control the heroes, so the continent wasn't transforming into the new continent that the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee wanted it to become.

However, it was an undeniable fact that they got things done pretty quickly.

Everia had just been destroyed, but they had already announced the revamped

Continental Protection Management Committee. Their announcement *did* calm down the denizens trembling in fear. I was sure Ji-Hye noona had heard that news as well.

'Noona, you can't let those guys beat you. You know that, right?'

Those bastards' plan was going swimmingly, and the public had noticed their movements. The people were already raising their voices about how they wanted Kim Hyun-Sung to participate in upcoming wars.

Meanwhile, a hero from the Union of Kingdoms kicked up a fuss, causing an incident that I thought was a bit too much of a coincidence

'No, it's embarrassing to even call him a hero.'

The Sacred Democratic Country's media outlets remained kind, and they didn't bother writing about the incident.

However, the media outlets of the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee wrote many articles about it.

They were also talking about how those with transcendental powers had to be under the continent's control and that the same had to be done to normal adventurers.

Cha Hee-Ra hadn't been doing anything despite the serious issue.

Kim Hyun-Sung was on a strange journey, while Rafael's whereabouts were unknown.

Jung Ha-Yan also didn't seem a bit interested in the ongoing crisis.

Honestly, if they had shown their faces to the media even once, I was sure the Committee's media would have regretted saying such words.

The issue wouldn't have gotten so bad.

The media was saying things that rats like Song Soo-Kyung wanted the media to say.

'Who would've thought?'

“All right, you bastard. Let’s see just how well you do,” I mumbled.

- What?

“It’s nothing,” I said.

- I’m telling you this just in case you’re offended, but the Blue Guild had no say in the matter. And I had to express my support at the very least. You know how it is. The guild’s situation might probably improve. I mean, they promised to support us in various ways regardless of whether the committee is successful or not…

“…”

- There aren't going to be any problems maintaining the guild.

“…”

- Honestly… I don’t think things will go their way, but…

“Yes, I’m sure it won’t,” I commented.

- The guild master and Miss Ha-Yan won’t accept it. I’m sure the guild master himself doesn't want something like that to happen.

‘Yeah. I trust Hyun-Sung, and I trust Ha-Yan even more.’

The small fry were useless. The Sunset Swordsman, the archmage, and the Mercenary Queen were important. Of course, our lovely regressor was the most important among them. Those bastards wouldn't listen even under political threat, and they weren't interested in the peace of the continent. It just wasn't worth the effort in their eyes.

Song Soo-Kyung and the group of villains wanted the three—no, four along with Rafael.

They had to control one of the four heroes for their plan to work. The bastard Song Soo-Kyung was aware of that which was why he was practicing riding a griffon to impress Kim Hyun-Sung.

As expected, I saw him wearing goggles that didn’t look good on him at all.

It was ridiculous how he was trying to look fancy while riding a griffon.

He looked like he was riding the griffon just fine, but he seemed like the type who preferred flashy techniques to real, impactful ones. He flew for a while before eventually coming down.

I saw his aides welcoming him.

- They say that the master of the Blue Guild likes griffons.

- Yes, I heard that as well. He normally doesn't attend private events, but he's always around whenever there are griffon festivals… His hobby is collecting items related to that, and he goes on a ride by himself whenever he's in a bad mood…

- And Father Lee Ki-Young…

- *Haha*… Unfortunately, he struggled a lot when it came to handling griffons. He can ride one, but he was prohibited from flying too high as well as flying too fast. Of course, I heard that the two often flew together, but it might've been boring for Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung.

'It wasn't boring, damn it.'

- It's not an exaggeration to say that Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung's skill in handling a griffon was the best in the continent.

- I wonder…

- I'm sure he wouldn't have any problems participating in a racing competition. I've had the opportunity to watch him ride a griffon from afar, and all I can say is that he was the best…

- How many griffons does the Blue Guild own?

- This isn't the exact number, but they have about fifteen. Two of them are adults, and the rest are—

- Please prepare a gift. I would like for you to prepare everything, including high-quality items.

- Understood.

- Please have it prepared by tomorrow. They say he might be returning today… We must provide him with the best treatment.

- Okay.

- I'm sure all of you understand just how important this task is. The Guild Master of the Blue Guild is the key we need to protect the continent. You must never forget that the Sunset Swordsman is the reason the continent still exists. Right now… he's unstable because of his losses, but I firmly believe that he'll eventually come around and return to his old self. He'll guide us with his bright sunset like he has always done.

-…

- With his bright sunset…

I found it annoying how Song Soo-Kyung was using his cunning tongue to pretend like he was a nice guy.

He was always smiling while working and was even friendly to those who were of lower status than him. Of course, it was just a ruse. He was doing that because he was worried about his public image. He worked as if there were forty-eight hours in a day, but…

'You think doing that will help you beat Ji-Hye noona?'

There was no way he could beat Ji-Hye noona, as she was the type to never stop once she was furious.

- There's something I need to tell you…

- What is it, Mr. Song Soo-Kyung?

- Please reserve the entire restaurant that the Guild Master of the Blue Guild visits often. I'm sure meeting new people will make him feel uncomfortable, so being in a familiar place is probably the best. After all, we want him to relax.

- Yes, sir. Is there anything else…

- I'll prepare everything else myself. Please let me know as soon as you hear the news that Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung returned. Also… about *that* issue…

- It's not enough, but it's ready.

The group stood up, and his aides were busy talking to each other.

Song Soo-Kyung seemed slightly nervous. At first, I couldn't tell what they were discussing, but I eventually understood what they were talking about as I listened.

- According to the stories I heard, the Sunset Swordsman was always with Father Lee Ki-Young whenever he went to battle. Father Lee Ki-Young wasn't actually on the battlefield, but they were connected mentally. This is a bit exaggerated, but to the enemy, I'm sure they thought those two actually had one brain.

-…

- I've heard that whenever there are battles Father Lee Ki-Young would sit in a large room filled with Goddess' Mirrors. He'd act as the Sunset Swordsman's eyes. It's not something ordinary humans can do. Unless you're a god looking down on the battlefield, it'd be impossible to see exactly what's going on throughout an ever-changing battlefield. I think that's why Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung relied on him a lot.

-…

- Father Lee Ki-Young would always guide him on where he needed to go so he'd never get lost. He'd always find ways to break through… *Haha*… they truly are soulmates.

-…

Song Soo-Kyung nodded and looked ahead.

The room up ahead was filled with the Goddess' Mirrors, and there was a helmet on the table. I reckoned it was an artifact because there were strange wires attached to it, and it was covered in magic circles and inscriptions.

'A simulation?'

- Let's get started.

Song Soo-Kyung sat on the chair and wore the helmet.

Soon, a large mock battle was shown on the Goddess' Mirror. His eyes moved nonstop, and his nose soon started bleeding. The veins in his eyes popped as well, causing him to shed tears of blood. In the end…

- *Bleeeeeeeeeeh.*

Song Soo-Kyung collapsed, and he looked like he had lost consciousness.

Clearly, the sudden information overload was too much for him to handle.

The priests nearby ran over to him and cast healing spells.

Eventually, Song Soo-Kyung sat in his seat once again. He was tenacious, but the sight was so boring that I yawned.

- Mr. Mark, how fast… was the speed I experienced just now?

- It was the speed of a normal adventurer.

"Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung, my ass… *Hahaha*!" I laughed.

- It was the bare… minimum.

-…

"*Hahahahaha!* Dumbaaaas! You fooooooooool! Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung, my ass! Fuck you! Seraphim, bring me some coffee, damn it!" I ordered.

CHAPTER 795
THE LAST (28)

“The coffee tastes good today,” I commented.

“T-Thank you, Father,” Seraphim said.

“I’m not your father, you brat. Stop trying to make me like you,” I said.

“…”

“I knew that was going to happen. Song Soo-Kyung’s intelligence stat isn’t low, but… Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung, my ass. You won’t even be able to handle Tactical Shiro… You’re just a *greeeeeedy* bastard, you asshole. *Hahahahahaha*. Fuck you, you bastard. You should start with Tactical Shiro,” I laughed.

“Ordinary humans aren’t capable of doing that,” Seraphim commented.

“Right?”

“Of course! It wasn’t easy even for me, so how could a mere human imitate you? Having high intelligence stats won’t help, and it's not like it's easy to analyze and understand what’s going on in a battlefield,” Seraphim explained.

“You think so?” I asked.

“Even if he got lucky and succeeded, it’ll be nothing more than him imitating or providing simple support,” Seraphim answered.

“He's going to succeed because he got lucky?” I questioned.

“I-I was just assuming things,” Seraphim clarified.

“Go away,” I ordered.

“…”

‘Success, my ass… ’

There was an extremely low chance that Song Soo-Kyung would succeed based on his current state.

‘He can’t pull off something Ji-Hye noona gave up on.’

Lee Ji-Hye had been a commander of a few major battles, but she hadn't been able to control the Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung. The only thing she had been able to do was give a few simple orders, and even those orders were based on her tactical choices.

I wasn’t trying to look down on her, but Tactical Kim Hyung-Sung was truly something that she couldn't handle.

‘It’s also kind of different from what she’s used to.’

She hadn't actually "used" Kim Hyun-Sung. It was like she had taken advantage of him as if he were some kind of infantry with extreme speed. However, if that was all she wanted to do…

‘Was there really a need to create Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung?’

If that were all she needed, then she could've just made one herself from the ground up.

Unfortunately, this assumption of mine was meaningless, as no one was as fast as Kim Hyun-Sung.

The point was that Kim Hyun-Sung was the most efficient whenever he was moving by himself. In addition to having the ability to give tactical orders, one also needed to understand Kim Hyun-Sung. They needed to know his thoughts, his capabilities, his current condition, his skills, and even the smallest detail about him.

That was exactly why it was exceedingly difficult to control Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung.

It was only possible for me because we had built a solid bond and true friendship after overcoming numerous battles. We *truly* trusted each other as well.

‘You’re our lethal weapon.’

Mind’s Eye had contributed greatly, but our relationship was the biggest reason behind it.

‘Practice all you want. It's not going to happen.’

I knew what Song Soo-Kyung was thinking.

Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung was honestly impressive, and there wasn't anyone like him.

"I know you want to be like him. I know you want to fly around and take down the enemy, but Kim Hyun-Sung isn't even going to consider you as his opponent. Imagine being handed over a 2G flip phone when you've been using the latest smartphone throughout your entire life. Do you really think that you can use that phone?

"What you're doing here is just going to ruin your mental state."

- *Bleeeeeeech! Haa… haa… haa…*

- Are you okay?

- *Bleeeh… Haa… haa…*

- Mr. Song Soo-Kyung, I think you should stop for today…

- No, I’m fine. This is something… I must do. There’s no guarantee that we won’t get into a similar situation where we have to go to war with demons wearing angel masks again. *Haa… haa…*

-…

- I have to get used to this as fast as possible. Everyone living on the continent must feel safe in the place they’re living in.

-…

- It's definitely possible. I know Father Lee Ki-Young is a great man, but he was human, just like me. I think I need a slightly different method. I need an item that will increase my Intelligence stat. If there are any potions left, it should work as well.

‘Had I made a potion that increases Intelligence?’

“So he’s trying to use drugs,” I mumbled.

I was sure there were potions with a similar effect, similar to a stimulant, but I wasn't sure if they could get something like that right now because the potions I had made while I was still alive were bound to run out.

‘The ones being sold in the market probably aren’t as effective… ’

- Are you unable to increase the output of the device a little more?

- We can, but there’s a high chance that it’ll overload your body. Currently…

- The amount of information I’m able to get is too limited. My eyes can't see everything that’s displayed here… so I need a way for my mind to absorb all of the information directly. The output has to be increased, or it's useless. Please increase it. I’m sure I can endure it.

'So that's how the device works. I expected it, but… '

‘Does he have a death wish?’

It seemed that was the best he could do. He didn’t have Mind’s Eye or Elune's Telescope, after all. I finally understood what that helmet was capable of doing.

If it could input information into his mind without his eyes actually looking at the information, then it would have a similar effect as Mind's Eye. He would have enough time to take deep breaths if the time to recognize and accept information was shortened, but that wasn't enough at all.

- Will you really be okay?

- Yes. It may be difficult now, but… if we wait a little longer…

“Wait for what?” I questioned.

Naturally, I looked at him using Mind’s Eye, and I saw something interesting.

His intelligence stat was at 89 and…

“I think it’s been a while since… he changed jobs,” I mumbled.

It was almost time for him to change jobs. Everyone on the continent knew that once one had reached 90 points in Intelligence, one would obtain a new attribute.

It was similar when it came to jobs.

The system would offer jobs the adventurer could change into based on their actions.

In other words, if all Song Soo-Kyung did was eat, sleep, and play on that device, he might get a job related to those actions.

“Shit. What a nasty bastard…” I said.

I finally understood what "analyst" meant in his nature.

“This sly rat,” I said.

He understood the system. He had been making calculations on how he could do this and that at maximum efficiency.

I wasn’t sure whether it was a coincidence, but there was a high chance that he had been thinking about it for a long time now if that was his goal.

However…

“You can only go so far, damn it,” I commented.

There was a reason Kim Hyun-Sung became Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung.

I turned my attention to our regressor, and I couldn’t help but notice his slightly listless posture. It looked like he was going home without achieving much in the North. It seemed that he had picked up a strange relic or item, but he knew it was useless.

‘He does look kind of pitiful.’

Perhaps I should have given him a sword or something.

I used Elune’s account—Benigoa told me his log-in credentials—to connect to the market up above.

I saw a variety of swords. I tried to find a decent one, but…

'Swords are too expensive… '

The heroes in other dimensions definitely preferred swords because swords were up to five times more expensive than other weapons. I thought these prices were unreasonable seeing that their stats were nowhere near Durandal.

To make matters worse, the delivery fee was just—

'Taxes are too high… Life is so hard.'

—it was just too expensive.

I had no idea why Kim Hyun-Sung was walking down a snowy mountain where his feet were sinking into the snow, but if I had to guess, it was probably because he needed some alone time.

He was walking down a snowy mountain with a blank expression.

After finding a cave nearby, he sat down and started crying.

However, he eventually shook his head and smacked his own face before leaning against the wall as if he were the protagonist of an anime. After taking out the Goddess' Hand Mirror, he used his large fingers to press the buttons.

His face brightened up, but his expression quickly became serious.

He ran out of the cave and spread his wings. He had just seen the news about how my statue was crying tears of blood. The way he flew across the sky made him look cool.

- Miss Kim Mi-Young? Are you here?

- Yes, Master. It's me.

- I read your message. Just now, I… I mean, when did it start exactly? When did it happen?

- It started at 11 AM on the 21st.

- Why didn't you tell me earlier?! Damn it!

-…

-…

- I'm sorry, sir.

'Stop yelling at her… You're the one who didn't read it… You're going to hurt her feelings. She's really going through a rough time right now… '

It was already difficult to maintain a decent work-life balance.

'Will you take responsibility if she leaves the Blue Guild? It seems like she's been getting recruitment offers recently.'

- N-No… I'm sorry. I… I was… I'm sorry. I must've lost my temper. I'm sorry, Miss Kim Mi-Young.

- You don't need to apologize, Master. I should've prepared a more direct way to contact you… I was careless.

'You have such a big heart… You're the real treasure of our guild, Miss Kim Mi-Young.'

- It's fine. Right now, I'm… So… did you see any other signs? Were there any other messages? Are you sure the guild is investigating this right now? How many people know about this… Does Miss Hye-Jin know about this? That spear…

Kim Hyun-Sung was talking so fast that I couldn't understand him.

- Yes, I did notify…

- Actually, I should go there myself and see it. Please restrict access to the temple. Do it now! Where is Miss Ha-Yan right now? Can she come to where I'm going?

- Miss Jung Ha-Yan doesn't know about this, but… I can send her to your location.

- N-No… it's fine. I'm glad… she doesn't know. You did well. I'm going as fast as I can. I'll be heading to the temple right away.

Kim Hyun-Sung seemed to be doing something that resembled a prayer while flying. It seemed like he was praying that nothing bad would happen.

It had been a while since we last saw each other, but he was still the same old Kim Hyun-Sung.

Our healthy relationship existed, all thanks to the trust we had in each other and the bond we had built.

Not only would it be impossible for that arrogant bastard to replace me, but I was also sure that Kim Hyun-Sung would never abandon Lee Ki-Young.

Back then, I was afraid of getting abandoned, but I no longer had to be afraid. I didn't need to worry, so I just had to continue with my task and see if I could give him something else aside from a sword.

'I trust you, Hyun-Sung.'

I decided to send him a message as well but in a sad tone.

[I… I… trust you, Sunset Swordsman.]

- Mr. Ki-Young! Mr. Ki-Young! Shit! Mr. Ki-Young!!!

CHAPTER 796
THE LAST (29)

He looked fuckin' miserable even in my eyes, and his voice sounded like he was yearning for something desperately. His voice convinced me that he'd never betray my trust. It was true that I was a bit nervous, but…

'It's time that I trust him since our relationship is based on trust in the first place.'

In addition, I was going to give him a holy item soon. I questioned whether giving it to him right now was a good idea, but it wouldn't hurt to have it prepared ahead of time.

The fact that I had even prepared something for him was important. Honestly, I also couldn't help but think about whether I was being a bit too cold to him or not.

I started tapping my thigh while engrossed in my own thoughts.

"Lee Ki-Young? Lee Ki-Young?" Benigoa called out.

"Yes? I'm sorry, Benigoa," I said.

"Did you work late yesterday, too?" she asked.

"Something like that," I answered.

"You're working too hard, Lee Ki-Young. What if you get sick or something? You should take a break. Your body is an important asset, don't you agree?" she asked.

"Yes, you're right. You were talking about recruiting Elune a moment ago, right?" I asked.

"Yeah! It's going very smoothly, Lee Ki-Young. Elune was being a bit difficult and even threatened to notify the higher-ups. However the elves basically became beggars after the World Tree's destruction. His statue has disappeared completely as well, and even his temple was destroyed.

"In other words, Elune isn't in any position to make decisions," she replied.

"*Ah*, I see," I said.

"I scared him a bit by asking what he's going to do with the elves. He got down on his knees and started begging," she added.

'Was it really necessary to make him get down on his knees?'

It seemed that their relationship wasn't the same as the relationship between Kim Hyun-Sung and me. I knew something strange was going to happen when I heard Benigoa say that she could do something about it, but she was really…

'The devil itself.'

It was possible that the higher-ups had decided to recruit Benigoa because they didn't want the enemy forces to become stronger.

"When I told him that it was too late to beg, he grabbed my skirt, and I got so embarrassed. He shouldn't have been so arrogant, *tsk*. Anyway, don't worry. I made sure to teach Elune a lesson. He's not going to kick up a fuss once he joins us. *Ah*, Lauren said that she would join us. I can bring her here, right?" Benigoa asked.

"Yes. I think it's best if she joins the next meeting. The Federation has been somewhat restored, and we need to discuss what we're going to do next. If possible, bring Elune as well…" I instructed.

"The problem is the higher-ups," Benigoa said.

"What?"

"I'm not sure yet, but I think the higher-ups have become suspicious of me. Actually, it's more like they're scolding me to bring the Sunset God up here as soon as possible. I did tell them that he keeps rejecting the offer, but… they probably think that I'm incompetent because they said that they were going to meet him directly," Benigoa explained.

"We should be careful of that. I think it's best to tell them that we're currently in the process of signing the contract with him," I told her.

'It's going to be the end once Hyun-Sung makes it up here.'

"How dare they call me incompetent. I'm just being low-key right now, but when the opportunity comes, I'm going to scold all of them," Benigoa said.

"…"

"…"

'I think she's kind of drunk… '

Perhaps it was because she managed to make Elune kneel, but her body language was telling me that she was being arrogant right now. She seemed drunk on the idea that she had become someone important.

'What do I do with you… '

Belial seemed to have unknowingly influenced Benigoa since they had been spending a lot of time together. I finally understood why parents often told their kids not to be friends with bad kids.

"What about you, Lee Ki-Young? Think you can stop it?" Benigoa asked.

"It depends on how the humans in the real world behave, but there will be some damage. I actually wanted to discuss this today… I think we should increase the budget for the damage restoration. I'm sure the Director of Finance will do well. Right, Miss Dialugia?" I asked.

"…"

"She said yes," I said.

"*Kgh…* We're pretty tight even with our current budget… Maybe I should send a divine message as well. Or maybe it's better to just observe for now. Humans can probably overcome it because that human named Lee Ji-Hye has yet to reveal her intentions," Benigoa said.

"I think it wouldn't hurt to send one after an observation. Anyway, there's a bastard that's been getting on my nerves…" I suggested.

I used my thumb to draw a line across my neck.

Benigoa turned to look at me and said, “You know better than that. It’s forbidden for a god to demand the death of a human. If a human in the real world dies because of a god's divine message, the system will penalize you.

"The system might even deny our independence."

Benigoa's words were familiar. It seemed that I had come to the same conclusion pretty early when I was learning more about the system.

“If that were even possible—when you were like a lump of cancer to the continent, I mean, when people misunderstood you… someone would’ve sent that kind of message at the time.

"*Ah!* Of course, I’m not saying that I would send that kind of message… It could be Elune or Lauren since you guys don’t really get along,” Benigoa hurriedly added.

So that was the reason the higher-ups didn’t send any divine messages related to me.

“In that case… I want you to mention that a demon is nearby and that they’re a demon who’s putting on an innocent face. Not right now though. I’ll tell you when the time's right,” I requested.

“I-I don’t know what you’re saying, but okay. B-but it's bad if you keep saying things like that, Lee Ki-Young. Gods who kill humans arbitrarily because they’re either jealous of them or find them annoying always end up in a bad situation.

"You have to grow up. Humans are just humans, and we’re gods. We have to act in a way that fits that position. Shouldn’t we maintain our dignity as higher beings?” Benigoa questioned.

I was sure that Benigoa had neither dignity nor class. After all, she had made Elune kneel and even grab her skirt.

“If you were to follow the normal protocol of becoming a god, you’d receive training on everything… But… It can’t be helped since you’re a special case. As your senior, it’s my job to teach you everything!” Benigoa exclaimed.

‘I want to go back as soon as possible.’

“Let’s do our best today, too. Let’s gather our hands. Now! Come here, Dialugia!” Benigoa shouted.

“…”

“One, two, three!”

“Fighting[1]…”

“Fighting…!”

“F-Fight…”

Dialugia looked at us as if we were pathetic, and she didn’t even finish her cheer.

Benigoa revealed a proud look. It seemed that this was the source of her confidence.

She straightened her back, snorted, held a cup of coffee in one hand, and put on a pair of sunglasses. I was starting to get worried that she might cause trouble, but since Lauren and Elune had decided to join us, I was sure that it was going to be fine.

“Call me if you find anything strange, Lee Ki-Young!” Benigoa shouted.

“Okay.”

It was kind of strange, but…

‘Still, it’s a relief that she’s here.’

I contemplated a lot about whether recruiting Benigoa was a good thing or not, but she had been helpful so far. In addition to helping me learn the ropes, she was also helpful during situations like this.

‘She’s definitely a god.’

Benigoa sounded kind of mature when she made the comment about how we had to act in a way that suited our position as well as how we had to keep in mind that we were gods and that they were just humans.

‘She’s right. There’s no point in getting annoyed by an insignificant human. I need to

maintain my dignity as someone of a higher position.'

Of course, he still deserved to get hit by an iron mace of light and justice. However, it wasn't my job to do. Kim Hyun-Sung would probably crack his head open himself even if I didn't do something about him.

I kicked the chair and moved my chair, settling in a more comfortable sitting position before observing Kim Hyun-Sung once again.

'I'm really excited for this.'

I finally understood the feelings of those who liked watching their soap operas.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked nervous inside the temple. Obviously, he was crying, and it seemed that he had even wiped away the tears of blood on the statue. I intentionally stopped talking, but he acted as if he could still hear my voice.

- Are you okay, Mr. Ki-Young? Did something happen over there?

-…

- Please answer me. I'm really worried.

-…

- Please tell me what you meant by you trust me. If it's something I can do, I'll do it right now. Or I'll come find you. If you're in a complicated situation because of the higher-ups, I'll go there. Please open the door! Tell me if you need help!

-…

- You… You know how stupid I am. Please… I beg you. Mr. Ki-Young… tell me what happened and what you want.

-…

- Damn it…

I was kind of worried because he was screaming nonstop in the temple. However, his actions proved that our bond was still strong.

When the statue didn’t show any changes, he grabbed his sword and turned around to leave the temple. He was probably thinking that he would receive some kind of news from the other temples.

‘He should be arriving any second. Actually, he’s probably already waiting for him.’

As expected, I saw the bastards waiting for him outside the temple.

‘Have a taste of Doom Hyun-Sung.’

Song Soo-Kyung and his group of villains ran toward Kim Hyun-Sung.

This was a sigh I had been wanting to see for a long time now.

‘This situation is so ridiculous.’

They were dressed up, and his griffon was next to him as if he had just arrived. Of course, the griffon position was intentional. The logo on the saddle was placed in a certain way so that it would be clearly visible.

I wondered how many people would fall for that.

Shit, did he really think that someone like Hyun-Sung wouldn't notice something like that?

- Guild Master of the Blue Guild. It’s nice to meet you.

-…

- I’m Song Soo-Kyung of the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee. I know it’s rude to suddenly…

-…

- It’s truly an honor to meet you. I know this isn’t the best time, but there’s something I’d like to speak with you about…

As expected, Kim Hyun-Sung didn’t even notice the guy, who continued talking despite getting ignored. If it weren't for the fact that Kim Hyun-Sung wasn’t within the temple grounds, he would have already run away or spread his wings.

- Sunset Swordsman, if you could give me some of your time…

'Shit, Hyun-Sung. I'm touched.'

He wasn't even looking in Song Soo-Kyung's way and was moving while gnashing his teeth.

- Master of the Blue Guild! Master of the Blue Guild!

The cunning rat became anxious, and he could tell that something was wrong. I was sure that this wasn't what he was expecting. However, the bloody tears of Kim Hyun-Sung's comrade meant that he wasn't going to stop for Song Soo-Kyung.

- Sunset Swordsman! Please hear me out!

He ended up crossing the line by standing in front of Kim Hyun-Sung with his arms wide, acting like the protagonist of a movie.

He was determined to make Kim Hyun-Sung listen to him, even if it meant putting his life on the line, but it seemed that he had no idea that he would actually have to put his life on the line for what he had done.

Meanwhile, I was kind of anxious because Kim Hyun-Sung had a soft side.

I didn't think that he'd treat him coldly, but it seemed that my worries were meaningless.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked at the guy before him and said, "Get lost."

"…"

---

1. 'Fighting' (pronounced hwaiting) is used in Korean to cheer on someone and to wish someone good luck. It is used to express encouragement and to show support for a person's actions. ☜

CHAPTER 797
THE LAST (30)

It felt as if the air had frozen instantly.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked so cold that I thought harsh winds were blowing from the North.

I started questioning whether he was still the same Kim Hyun-Sung whom I had known all this while.

Of course, this wasn't my first time seeing such a cold expression on his face.

I saw that expression when he became Doom Hyun-Sung as well as when he looked at me after our bond had broken.

However, the expression he was showing right now was completely different from those expressions. It was cold, yes, but there was something different to it. If I had to use a word to describe it, I would say that he looked… indifferent.

Kim Hyun-Sung was staring at Song Soo-Kyung as if he were looking at a rock or an ant. At least, he looked hostile toward me when our bond broke, but he didn't even show any hostility as he stared at Villain Song.

There was no emotion except for the fact that he was slightly annoyed.

I was sure he was wondering why this person—I mean, this "thing" was at the temple. It wasn't the best example, but I finally realized why indifference was scarier than negative comments.

- S-S-Sunset… Swordsman?

- Get lost.

- What?

-…

Kim Hyun-Sung looked like he didn't want to talk anymore because he raised one arm.

'What the hell? Really? You're really going to hit him? You're not the type to handle things using violence.'

It wasn't just a simple threat. He didn't raise his sword, yes, but if he were to swing his arm, there was no guarantee that Song Soo-Kyung wouldn't get hurt. Actually, I was sure it'd be a one-way trip to the afterlife.

'You're really going to go that far?'

I wasn't sure whether I should stop him or watch him do it.

Actually, I didn't even know why he was doing that in the first place, but I was happy.

'I knew you wouldn't fail me! Crush him! Do whatever you want!'

However, I was worried as well because this wouldn't help Kim Hyun-Sung correct his values. The first time was hard, but it would get easier to do afterward.

If he could still live a happy life after cracking someone's head open just because he found the other party annoying, then he could no longer be considered a hero.

'Still, you shouldn't kill him. All he did was block your path.'

'You're not a psychopathic murderer. Our Hyun-Sung isn't a murderer. You're someone who cherishes life.'

Actually, it seemed like he was thinking that he wasn't about to kill a human being. He was probably thinking that he was just going to get rid of a rock in his way.

'Shit, should I really be worried about things like this?'

"All right, fine! Show him, Hyun-Sung! Smack his head with the sunset strike!" I shouted.

The back of Kim Hyun-Sung's hand immediately flew toward Villain Song, and his

hand moved so fast that the latter could not think of anything other than. However, Kim Hyun-Sung's hand stopped right in front of him.

Of course, It wasn't because Kim Hyun-Sung suddenly recognized Villain Song as a human being. I figured that it was because Kim Hyun-Sung realized they were still on temple grounds, and it was evidenced by how he looked back.

Kim Hyun-Sung looked like he didn't want his parents to find out that he was doing something bad.

Kim Hyun-Sung seemed to understand that he was doing something he wouldn't normally do because he looked regretful, but even if he didn't withdraw his strength, his fist wouldn't reach Song Soo-Kyung anyway because a figure was blocking his arm.

"Chang-Ryeol… you shouldn't have stopped him," I said.

- Please forgive me for my rudeness, Master. But…

Lee Chang-Ryeol was one of the few guild members who was still normal, and he had already made a name for himself by becoming a high-ranking adventurer.

Normally, I'd praise him for his smart move because if Kim Hyun-Sung really did bash Villain Song's head open, it would cause a ton of problems. Honestly, it would only be a matter of time before the Blue Guild ended up getting in trouble.

In addition to the political affairs that had to be resolved, the Blue Guild would end up getting cornered, too. However, I didn't really want to thank Lee Chang-Ryeol.

'He might break his arm.'

Lee Chang-Ryeol had extremely high Agility stats as an assassin. In other words, his Endurance and Strength were low. I was sure his arms were crying out right now. He was probably frowning behind the mask he was always wearing.

- It's fine, Mr. Chang-Ryeol. I almost made a mistake. I was on the temple grounds and I almost… made a mistake.

- It's okay. I should've paid more attention, Master. Regarding the temple…

- I would like for you to escort the guests. There's someplace I need to be. I'll be going…

- Understood.

- Master of the Blue Guild! Wait, there's something—

- Shut up if you don't want to die, you idiot.

- What?

- I told you to shut up.

Lee Chang-Ryeol spoke harshly as he grabbed Song Soo-Kyung's arm, which he raised once again to call out to Kim Hyun-Sung.

Lee Chang-Ryeol had to have realized the gravity of the situation because he looked like he was in a hurry as well. Lee Chang-Ryeol was acting unlike his usual self because he'd normally act rationally, but this was probably because he had seen Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes.

It made sense as Lee Chang-Ryeol wasn't the type to insult a key member of the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee.

Unfortunately, Song Soo-Kyung had no idea that he had almost died because he was still talking, even though his legs were trembling. I admired him for that, but it wasn't a wise decision.

Lee Chang-Ryeol pulled him off the road while holding his arm…

- The grass.

-…

- Don't step on the grass.

Kim Hyun-Sung was enveloped by the sunset. He spread his wings and was about to fly into the sky when—

- H-have you not heard about Everia's collapse?!

-…

- Everia has been destroyed! The World Tree is gone, and there aren't even traces of Everia. A new threat is coming! A plague is also spreading throughout the continent, and the number of mysterious disappearances has been increasing. There's a threat on the continent, and it is causing a lot of chaos! The revamped Continental Protection Management Committee is doing its best to protect the continent! We need your help! We're preparing to fight for the denizens! We're preparing for a great cause!

-…

Kim Hyun-Sung definitely heard him, but he flapped his wings as if he weren't interested at all.

- This is the continent Father Lee Ki-Young protected!

Kim Hyun-Sung came to a halt.

'Why would you use my name here?'

It wasn't a bad idea because it caught Kim Hyun-Sung off-guard, but we'd have to see whether that remark was great or bad. I bet it was the latter, though.

Kim Hyun-Sung frowned. Anger and sadness welled up in his heart, and a burst of killing intent rushed out of him.

I wasn't sure what he was thinking, but his anger had probably exploded.

'How dare you say the name of my precious brother?' He was probably thinking something similar to that. Lee Chang-Ryeol looked as if the matter was over and that there wasn't anything he could do at this point.

Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes became bloodshot. He definitely bit on his lips a little too hard because there was blood on his lips. He needed to vent his anger, as he had no one to resent. After all, he was the one who stabbed me.

- *Ah… ugh…*

Song Soo-Kyung's legs trembled violently beneath the killing intent.

I was amazed that he could still say something.

- I-It's… the continent that he had saved by sacrificing himself.

- Shut up.

What a tenacious bastard…

'But you've stepped on a landmine.'

- The continent that Father Lee Ki-Young wants…

- How dare you say his name?

- W-We must protect it.

- You? How dare you! How dare you!

- T-T-The continent…

He just won't stop talking. The only thing that was waiting for him now was a life in the pigsty. Hyun-Sung had been really stressed these days, so he'd probably use this chance to relieve his stress.

- Mr. Lee Ki-Young will be sad.

Kim Hyun-Sung stopped moving, and he saw Song Soo-Kyung crying in front of him.

- I'm sure he's sad right now. He's probably mortified by the fact that the continent he had protected by sacrificing his life is under threat once again and that the denizens are going to be in pain again.

'Huh?'

- W-W-We must… protect it again.

'What the hell? No, Hyun-Sung.'

- I'm sure Father Lee Ki-Young… doesn't want the Sunset Swordsman to ignore the continent.

‘That’s not true… ’

- To protect the continent, we need your power…

-…

- For his return…

-…

- We must ensure that the continent… that he loves is still intact…

Kim Hyun-Sung gritted his teeth, and he reached out with his hand toward the guy, who had already wet his pants from fear. The regressor wasn't showing any hostility. It was more like he had come to a realization. He was putting together the puzzle pieces about why my statue was shedding tears of blood.

‘Bastard. Damn it.’

I was suddenly annoyed. There was a time when I had resolved myself to get rid of impure people if they were to touch Kim Hyun-Sung.

The thought that some bastard was trying to take my regressor, whom I worked so hard to raise made me feel nervous. It was also the reason I was hostile toward Jo Hye-Jin when I first met her.

‘Shit. Dignity of a god, my ass.’

I wanted to kill him myself because that would be the cleanest method, but I couldn’t do it. It wasn’t only because of Benigoa’s advice, but it would complicate things down there as well.

‘I’m the one who raised him, but you want to reap the profits? You want to take it away just like that when I’m the one who had put in all the hard work? I’m the one who got stabbed, but you’re getting all the profits for it.’

It was extremely unfair, and it started messing up my judgment. I had shed blood, sweat, and tears, but Villain Song was the one who'd get to be happy in the end. I had no other choice. The solution was simple. I just needed to avoid giving a direct order to kill him. It wasn’t even a tactical strategy.

[He is your enemy, Sunset Swordsman. He’s an incarnation of a demon, and he's the one who has been causing me pain these days. I’m in pain, Sunset Swordsman. Help me. I’m… I’m in so much pain…]

That was all I needed to say, but I saw Kim Hyun-Sung extending his hand out toward Song Soo-Kyung.

‘What the hell?’

I couldn’t understand what he was doing. Could he not hear me?

'Hyun-Sung, do you not hear me?'

[He’s our enemy.]

‘What’s going on?’

[Sunset Swordsman, can you hear me?]

‘Uh… ’

[Mr. Hyun-Sung, my voice—]

Kim Hyun-Sung grabbed Mr. Song’s hand and helped him up.

[Hyun-Sung, can you hear me?]

- Can you tell me the details?

My mind went blank. I didn’t know why, but my voice wasn’t reaching Kim Hyun-Sung.

There was something wrong with the Regressor Instruction Manual.

- I reserved a suitable place to talk about this. I’ll lead the way. *Ah!* Let me… introduce myself again, Master of the Blue Guild. I’m Song Soo-Kyung.

-…

- I’m Song Soo-Kyung of the revamped Continental Protection Management

Committee. I… really wanted to meet you.

CHAPTER 798
THE LAST (31)

The Regressor Instruction Manual was a Mythic attribute. In addition, it was an attribute that broke the rules of the continent and was more like an "irregular-rank" attribute.

Of course, it wasn’t just the Regressor Instruction Manual; every single Mythic attribute was overpowered. They were strong enough to affect part of the system, and one couldn’t use ordinary methods to remove them.

Basically, if one was being affected by a Mythic item or attribute, one wouldn't be able to get rid of it.

Jo Hye-Jin's spear was like that.

It was described as unbreakable, so it would never break. It could bend, melt, and it could even be overcome by rust, but it would never break on its own.

Of course, it could be broken by something as even the Mythic rank had upper and lower variations in strength.

The problem was that the Regressor Instruction Manual was an Upper Mythic attribute.

Kim Hyun-Sung and I were connected; it was a connection that would never break. I would be able to read everything about him, and my voice would always reach him.

Unless an"irregular" item was affecting that connection…

‘Shit… what could that be?’

I felt my blood go cold.

“Damn it, Kim Hyun-Sung! You idiot! Seraphim, you bastard! Masked scum Jin Cheong!” I roared. I was annoyed, but I had to calm down because I knew I wouldn’t

get anything done while annoyed.

'What's the reason behind the disconnection?'

Could it be a system's interference?

Was this the penalty for breaking the rules?

Was there an irregular item that was even stronger than the instruction manual? It wouldn't be strange at all if a being or an item stronger than the instruction manual was interrupting our connection. If Song Soo-Kyung had a Mythic-rank artifact capable of blocking all nearby communication, I would be able to understand the current situation, but…

"I don't think that's it…" I mumbled. There was no way that idiot could obtain such an item, and Mythic items were pretty rare in the first place. If some sort of powerful being was interrupting our connection, then I had an idea as to who they could be.

'We're still connected.'

Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes hadn't lost that golden hue. He just couldn't hear my voice. I could still feel his emotions, and I could still feel a variety of information from him. Of course, I didn't have proof that this was all fabricated, but the connection between us was still there.

I got up and walked around the chair. I saw three lights tremble to catch my attention, but I didn't bother looking at them. The silver light approached me slowly as if it had made up its mind, but I waved it away, and it went back to its place.

'Do I need to ask Hye-Jin to take care of it?'

No, what if it was connected to Jo Hye-Jin? What if it were to break the connection?

I couldn't help but become worried.

"Miss Hye-Jin?" I called out.

-…

"Hye-Jin?" I repeated.

-…

“Hey, Jo Hye-Jin,” I said.

- Yes, Sub Guild Master? I’m here.

‘All right, I’m still connected to her.’

After releasing a sigh of relief, I told her the things that were on my mind.

“Listen to me, Hye-Jin. You know that bastard, Song Soo-Kyung?”

- Yes?

“Actually… it’s nothing. I’ll contact you later,” I told her.

‘We’re still connected.’

I wanted to tell her to get rid of Villain Song, but I couldn’t do that after discovering a possibility.

‘The possibility that the system is doing this to restrict me.’

It could be a warning.

I couldn’t say with certainty that the system had recognized my remark as an order to kill Song Soo-Kyung.

I didn’t say those words directly, but the system knew Kim Hyun-Sung would immediately take out his sword the moment he heard my voice. Telling him that I trusted him and my tears of blood were the limit.

Was talking about Song Soo-Kyung…

‘…crossing the line?’

How come I didn't get penalized when I was about to tell Hye-Jin to kill someone?

I could come up with countless reasons, but I wasn't certain about any of them. One thing I was sure of was that there wasn’t much I could do right now. I didn’t want to

be in a situation where I would completely lose the Regressor Instruction Manual or get my rights taken away by the system.

'I'm under restriction, but there are other ways.'

I used the Telescope to watch the two while tapping my thigh.

I saw them whispering to each other.

- Please forgive my rudeness, Master of the Blue Guild. I know you're busy, but… we're in a really serious situation…

-…

- How about talking over a simple meal?

-…

Song Soo-Kyung brought Kim Hyun-Sung to the restaurant that Kim Hyun-Sung and I visited often. Kim Hyun-Sung stared quietly at the building and replied, "I'm not in the mood to eat."

- *Ah*, I'm sorry.

- Please state your business.

Mr. Song looked shocked, and his shock relieved my annoyance.

'This bastard must be pissed.'

The most important thing that had to be done prior to bringing up something important was creating a good mood and building up to the main topic.

Telling someone to state their business at once could make them look like they were looking down on the other person.

It didn't seem like Kim Hyun-Sung was looking down on Villain Song, but he probably realized that Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't an easy person to talk to.

'Yeah, he hasn't completely fallen for it.'

I finally understood why he had reached his hand out toward Villain Song. He probably thought the tears of blood on my statue had something to do with the threat on the continent.

Villain Song hadn't lied as well. Of course, it didn't mean that I would forgive him.

- First of all, the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee…

They were talking in the middle of the street.

Kim Hyun-Sung had used a spell to isolate their voices, and it was a sight that one wouldn't get to see everyday.

'You haven't betrayed me yet. *But this is still considered betrayal, Hyun-Sung.'*

If possible, I wanted that bastard to make a mistake so that Kim Hyun-Sung would fall into the abyss and become Doom Hyun-Sung, but… he was doing his best to stay in his lane.

Villain Song had to have realized that my name was what triggered him because he was trying his best not to say anything negative.

Villain Song refused to say anything about fulfilling my dying wish or mention anything about how I was already dead. Instead, he said something along the lines of "the Committee will always be his home," and "the Committee was made for him."

A third party would definitely think that Villain Song was my follower.

Kim Hyun-Sung nodded as he listened.

Although I couldn't read his thoughts, I could feel his emotions, and he was getting swayed, which made me worry. After all, he had always been hopeless in situations like this. I wouldn't be surprised if he ended up accepting Villain Song's proposal.

'No, I'm sure he's not that *stupid.'*

- That's why I thought I needed your power. It's not a system created to control or suppress you. It's to create a continent where the denizens whom Father Lee Ki-Young loved dearly can feel safe. The revamped Continental Protection Management Committee needs the cooperation of the heroes who had saved the continent.

-…

- The revamped Continental Protection Management Committee is investigating the various abnormalities based on the information we've gathered so far. We can give you suggestions as to which missions you should take… We're lacking compared to Father Lee Ki-Young, but we're doing our best. We need you…

-…

- We need you to unify the continent once more, and we hope that you'll be the center of our cause.

Villain Song was so skilled at sugarcoating things.

It would have been better if he had decided to talk to Jo Hye-Jin or Miss Kim Mi-Young.

'You're not seriously falling for this, are you?'

It didn't sound bad, so I was hoping that he wouldn't fall for it. Actually…

'Kim Hyun-Sung doesn't like it whenever people sugarcoat things.'

Talking about being the center of whatever wasn't good for our child's mental health.

As expected, Kim Hyun-Sung's eyes were shaking. Luckily, he didn't seem pressured, but anyone could tell that he wasn't in the best condition. I wonder what Kim Hyun-Sung was thinking about when Villain Song basically begged him to carry those burdens again.

I felt dizzy, but it was from Kim Hyun-Sung, not me. He tightened his fist, and I couldn't quite describe what he was feeling. However, he looked like he was thinking about carrying those burdens again.

- The continent Father Lee Ki-Young loves…

-…

- The Sunset Swordsman…

-…

- Must protect it. For him…

Kim Hyun-Sung started breathing heavily. He looked around and saw the attendants of the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee around him along with Song Soo-Kyung.

He saw them looking at him, and I was sure he noticed a hint of hope on their faces.

Kim Hyun-Sung's stress level was rising.

Kim Hyun-Sung's thoughts were turning into images in my head.

I saw myself dying a slow and agonizing death, I saw his sword covered in blood, and I saw the devastated surroundings as well.

Soon, I saw the guild members running over, and I saw Park Deok-Gu crying his heart out.

I saw Jung Ha-Yan mumbling while holding her head, and I heard the cacophonous din around me.

I had never seen this before, but it wasn't strange as my eyes were already closed at this point. Park Deok-Gu was hugging me so hard that it looked like he was going to break my body. Actually, there was a chance that the pig was my actual murderer. I could say for sure that he had broken at least a bone in me.

'Please… heuuk… please… save our hyung-nim. Save our hyung-nim… '

I wasn't sure who he was talking to, but he was shouting at someone to save me.

The way the brilliant sunset shone down on everyone made the situation look even sadder as everyone cried loudly.

'Heuuk… Open your eyes already! Open… heuk… heuuuk… Please don't take him. Please… give our hyung-nim one more chance… Please… don't take him like this… Don't take him… '

Jung Ha-Yan wasn't all that different. Her breathing became rough, and she was

having a hard time breathing. As she stared at Park Deok-Gu, who was shaking my body, her eyes became filled with rage. If Han Sora hadn't arrived in time, there would have been a bigger problem.

Han Sora hugged Jung Ha-Yan tightly and cried. The way she moved her mouth made it seem like she wanted to say something, but she couldn't say anything because she was crying. I was worried that she was going to run out of breath.

'Keugh… argh… haa… keugh… '

Kim Hyun-Sung swept his gaze across everyone. I wasn't sure if he was actually aware of the things around him, but I was sure he was trying to take in everything.

Kim Hyun-Sung stared at the saint and saw the faint smile that tugged at my lips. It was a smile that I made as I breathed my last breath, and it seemed to be saying that sacrificing myself for the continent was worth it.

Soon, Kim Hyun-Sung frowned deeply, and his face eventually contorted until he looked like the world around him was collapsing down on him.

Outside, Song Soo-Kyung was staring at Kim Hyun-Sung's distorted face with a strange expression. Song Soo-Kyung's face looked twisted. I knew he was greedy for power, but there was something fishy about his expression.

CHAPTER 799
THE LAST (32)

What the hell was up with this bastard?

- I know it’s hard for you to give me an answer right now. I'm sure you need time to think about it.

-…

- If you have any questions, you can contact me anytime. I just want you to be aware of the fact that I’m always ready, Sunset Swordsman.

‘What the hell?’

Kim Hyun-Sung felt like he was out of place.

‘He’s feeling out of it.’

I couldn't help but think that perhaps Villain Song was one of Lee Ji-Hye’s men. Of course, it was a baseless assumption, but his expression looked so twisted that I started thinking seriously about my assumption.

I suddenly questioned why he had decided to go through all the trouble of starting the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee and being at the center of attention.

‘Is there something else that he wants? Or is he moving based on someone’s order?’

Song Soo-Kyung was under the Republic and the Union of Kingdoms' protection, but it didn’t mean that he would never be in danger.

He had to consider the fact there would always be a penalty the moment he showed himself to the public. To make things worse, he was trying to turn the hero of the continent into an enemy, so he could get killed in his sleep.

However, I didn’t think there was someone pulling the strings from behind the scenes.

There was no guarantee that Lucifer wasn’t behind this, but at least there wasn’t any evidence that a demon or other beings were involved in his decisions.

Taking my place seemed like his goal, but he wouldn’t do this if he weren't after power.

My thoughts were all over the place, and my heart broke to see the guild members bawling. Kim Hyun-Sung definitely felt the same because he was staring at the empty seat in the restaurant.

‘Forget it, man. There’s no need to be interested in it… ’

Kim Hyun-Sung's thoughts and whether Villain Song was actually doing this for the continent or not was none of my concern. I would think the same even if Villain Song was the continent’s last hope because it was undeniable that he had crossed the line.

Kim Hyun-Sung started walking away. He tightened his fist as if he had made up his mind, and I didn’t even want to see him because I was worried that he was going to betray me. Of course, his personality told me that he wouldn’t do that, but…

‘You never know what might happen.’

Today's loyal friend could become a traitor the next day. It was always better to think about the worst-case scenario. Anyway, what was I supposed to do if Kim Hyun-Sung ended up betraying me?

‘Dying is the only option.’

And that was when I heard a voice behind me. “How interesting.”

“It’s been a while, Belial,” I greeted.

“What do you think about that human? I think a useful human has finally appeared,” Belial asked.

Useful, my ass.

“I think there’s a misunderstanding,” I said.

“He *might* be useful,” Belial commented.

I had to eliminate Song Soo-Kyung. I was not sure if Villain Song had committed a sin terrible enough to have a miserable ending, but I wasn’t in the place to make that kind of judgement in the first place.

Kim Hyun-Sung's emotions were going up and down like a rollercoaster, and it made me feel like he was brainwashing himself. Honestly, I was kind of thankful for Villain Song.

Thanks to him, I felt like I had to reflect on myself.

The moment I stepped foot on the continent, I had never really shared anything with others. Those daring enough to touch my stuff deserved to die. I thought leaving it to Ji-Hye noona was the most reasonable method, but I honestly didn’t want to wait.

I didn’t know what she was up to anyway.

I felt my head cooling down. It seemed Belial had an idea as to what I was thinking, and he looked like he was really enjoying it.

Of course, I was sure he didn’t come here just to provoke me.

“Aren’t you curious?” Belial asked.

“What do you mean…” I asked.

“Aren’t you curious about that human?” Belial questioned.

“Not really,” I answered.

“Of course. Regardless of what kind of human he is, it doesn’t change the fact that he made you angry. He’ll find out eventually. Even if the system stops it, there are other ways… In the end, you’ll get what you want.

"By the way, I’m talking about ways to eliminate that lowly mortal,” Belial explained.

“…”

“We’re also under the system's restriction. It's kind of different, but think of the restriction as the necessity to notarize contracts. Contracts and getting summoned are the only ways we can have an impact on the real world.

"However, there have been cases of humans meeting a miserable end because they made a demon or a god angry,” Belial added.

“…”

“I brought something that might interest you, but I’m not sure if it’ll be helpful. I think it’ll be entertaining, though. Anyway, think of it as a bribe,” Belial said.

“…”

“I was actually getting bored, so this is good,” Belial added.

Belial looked like he was really enjoying all of this.

I wasn't sure why, but I was smiling as I said, “Thank you, Belial."

“I didn’t give this to you so that you can thank me,” he said.

Belial took out a small orb.

I looked into it, and I saw Song Soo-Kyung.

I wasn’t sure when this was taken, but it wasn’t the present because he looked different from his present self. He was wearing tattered clothes rather than the spotless uniform that he was wearing these days. The scenery was different. He was in Lindel, not the Union of Kingdoms and I could immediately tell what I was watching.

To be exact, I might be watching his memories. This could be the reason he decided to leave Lindel and go to the Union of Kingdoms.

However, how did Belial get this? Our Belial was really competent.

I glanced at Belial and looked back at the small orb.

The video was pretty boring, and I had no idea when it happened.

It was an ordinary video of Song Soo-Kyung going on a hunt with his comrades.

I watched the orb quietly, hoping that I would find a weak spot, but I couldn't find anything interesting. They exchanged ordinary conversation, but they weren't really interesting because they were just ordinary rookie adventurers.

"It's something you must do if you want to survive. Be brave."

"I know that."

"You think too much. Don't think too much about it, Soo-Kyung. Have you heard about the Blue Guild? Kim Hyun-Sung, Lee Ki-Young, and Jung Ha-Yan… It hasn't been that long since they arrived here, but the media is always talking about them.

"They say those three are the core adventurers of Lindel. Think of this as an opportunity. If we defeat monsters and get equipment, we'll become stronger. That's the basics. There's no guarantee that we can't be like them. We can *be like them."*

"…"

"Don't even think that God will save us. This place is our reality now, not Earth. Not only that, God really does exist here and they had abandoned us."

"I know. Let's move."

"Let's do it."

The scenery changed again, and I saw Song Soo-Kyung running away.

"Pant… pant… pant…"

"Soo-Kyung, run!"

"Pant… pant…"

A large monster was chasing Song Soo-Kyung. It seemed that an adventurer with them had ended up getting into an accident. His party was in serious trouble. After all, It was rare for adventurers to get chased in the middle of the forest by a monster that only high-rank adventurers could defeat.

The monster was hot on Song Soo-Kyung's heels as he ran recklessly through the forest. His pants were wet, and I felt better upon seeing him throwing his equipment away while crying loudly.

Clearly, he was desperate—desperate to survive.

“Aaaaah!!!”

“Shit! Min-Chul!”

“Help me! H-Help me!”

It seemed that the monster had caught one of them and had split the poor adventurer's body in half. Song Soo-Kyung couldn't even look back because he was too scared and was busy running.

“Haa… haa…”

He looked so different from his present self. Honestly, he looked like a scared moron.

He seemed out of it. Of course, who would be able to remain sane in a situation like this? The corpses of his comrades were hanging from the tree beside him, and the screams around him were nonstop, so this was a pretty extreme situation.

Many safety measures and protocols had become popular these days, so ordinary clans or small-sized guilds had probably experienced something similar to Song Soo-Kyung's plight.

“AAAHHH!”

“Go! Hang in there! Kill him!" I shouted.

The monster’s hand was about to grab Song Soo-Kyung when…

Fwoosh.

A shrill noise echoed, and the monster was split in half. Moments later, a figure appeared behind the monster.

“…”

I finally realized why Belial brought this small orb with him. Song Soo-Kyung's savior was none other than Kim Hyun-Sung.

"..."

Kim Hyun-Sung showed no emotions, and he turned around quietly without even looking at Song Soo-Kyung.

Song Soo-Kyung finally snapped back to reality, and he started trembling in fear.

'That was pretty cool. Hyun-Sung is pretty amazing. I admit that.'

Song Soo-Kyung had met Kim Hyun-Sung once before leaving Lindel.

Song Soo-Kyung's party members rushed to help him up, but he was staring at Kim Hyun-Sung's back.

"We're alive. Shit... We're saved."

"Soo-Kyung, are you okay?"

"Who was that just now? Was that... the Guild Master of the Blue Guild?"

"Why would he be here..."

"Shouldn't we thank him at least?"

"Master of the Blue Guild! Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung!"

Mr. Song's eyes widened at the sight before him. Kim Hyun-Sung was walking slowly amidst a horde of monsters. Multiple monsters would die instantly every time Kim Hyun-Sung swung his sword; they'd die so fast that they couldn't even shriek.

Mr. Song's face became filled with joy, and I finally understood why his expression looked so strange. I couldn't help but laugh out loud when I heard the word that he mumbled.

"Savior..."

"..."

"H-He's the savior…"

"Pfft!"

So that was the reason behind that expression?

I knew there was something strange, but this was just…

I couldn't stop laughing, and it wasn't because he called Kim Hyun-Sung a savior. It was all because I had just come up with a pretty good idea.

Belial smiled as well. He probably thought I had finally found the answer.

"I'd like to hear it as well," Belial said.

I didn't need to hide it because I needed his help, anyway.

"This bastard… *Pfft…"* I laughed.

"I'm going to make this bastard… get into a contract with a demon," I told him.

"*Haha*…" he chuckled.

"I'm going to make him get into a contract with a demon. *Hahahaha!*" I repeated.

"*Ha… hahahahaha!* I'd expect nothing from someone with such a nauseating soul," Belial remarked.

"I'm going to make him get into a contract with a demon. *Hahahaha!*" I laughed again.

Benigoa finally arrived, and she laughed with us. She had no idea what was going on, but she decided to laugh with us for fun.

"Huh?"

"Hahahahaha!"

"What?"

“Hahahaha!”

“Pfft! Hahahaha!”

CHAPTER 800
THE LAST (33)

I couldn’t quite describe Villain Song, but if I had to, I would say he was a follower of the sunset.

I had an idea about the driving force of his actions, and I realized how he managed to live so far without standing out.

If he truly considered Kim Hyun-Sung as his savior or a god, he probably thought Kim Hyun-Sung was still incomplete. He also believed that the majestic and overwhelming savior had become unstable after my death.

He was probably thinking of filling up the void that I had left and being the one to *complete* him. I couldn’t read Villain Song's mind, but my assumptions made complete sense based on what I was seeing.

On the screen, Villain Song did not look confident at all, and it seemed that he had yet to adapt completely to the continent. I was sure many things had happened in between, but the only thing that made him do the things he did was Kim Hyun-Sung.

‘Do you know who made him a god?’

I had built the regressor up from scratch.

‘Do you know how I completed Kim Hyun-Sung?’

I suddenly became angry at the thought that the bastard who had appeared out of nowhere was trying to taint what I had created, but I had to acknowledge the fact that some of my anxiety had disappeared from the revelation.

Benigoa was right. It seemed that he had realized the difference between us. Unlike my high expectations, he didn’t have much to show.

I wasn’t trying to over-evaluate myself, but it was just sad to compare his stats to mine.

'I'm more competent.'

In competitions like this, the one with nothing had the tendency to win. This wasn't the best example, but characters born into a poor family often end up having the last laugh, especially in soap operas.

Those living a steadfast life despite having no talents would end up winning, but this only happened in soap operas.

I patted the three lights that were floating around, and they started spinning around me. It seemed that my gesture made them feel good about themselves.

At the same time, I saw Song Soo-Kyung through the telescope and noticed he was moving pretty busily.

- A battle with the undead has broken out on the plains of Welsh. We haven't figured out the exact number of casualties yet…

- I'll send reinforcements.

- We need Miss Jung Ha-Yan's help. Not only is it taking a long time, but problems have occurred in some of the main cities, so our troops are unable to move. I think you should at least send griffons for support.

- We currently don't know Miss Jung Ha-Yan's whereabouts.

Our Ha-Yan was busy.

- Have you not figured out the source yet?

- It looks like the undead are multiplying rapidly around the areas where the plague has broken out. We can suppress them early, but holy power is ineffective against them.

Our Ji-Hye noona is doing well.

- Evacuate the civilians and cordon the area.

- Understood. I have—*Ahhhh!*

Our team's brigade twins had appeared behind the guy who had just received Song Soo-Kyung's order. The twins were wearing masks. There were only small fries around here, so I was sure I wouldn't see Villain Song.

- Is he dead?

- No, he's not.

- He's a mage, right?

- Yeah.

- And his rank?

- Around Epic.

- Let's take him.

- Unni will like him.

- Noona will like him.

Our twins were trustworthy and for some reason, I liked them as well in my past life.

They were members of our masked hero family.

If the psychopathic murderer had scolded them, I might have protected them and told the psychopathic murderer not to mess with the twins. Of course, I could have done the opposite as well.

Anyway, things weren't looking so good for Villain Song, and I saw him grabbing his head out of stress.

'You're already stressed out? It hasn't even begun yet.'

I wasn't trying to scold him for his incompetence. It really seemed like Lee Ji-Hye had yet to start her plans, but some of the smaller cities and the plains were already experiencing issues. They were minor issues that wouldn't have been reported if it weren't for Everia's downfall.

The nearby dungeons could have caused the issue as well. Of course, it could also be because of a new dungeon or a new field boss. In other words, it was an issue that the adventurers nearby had to resolve.

It happened pretty often in unstable areas. The problem was that these phenomena were happening everywhere. This wasn't something Song Soo-Kyung of the proud revamped Continental Protection Management Committee could resolve by sitting idly by.

'It would also be embarrassing to control the heroes as a group as well.'

Of course, one could take a sledgehammer to crack a walnut.

Our Ji-Hye noona was moving so swiftly that she was gaining the advantage little by little. Even without my Telescope, I could tell that it wasn't going to be easy to stop all these issues.

'Do you know how strong our Ji-Hye noona is?'

I couldn't say I was a hundred percent right, but Song Soo-Kyung was definitely stressed. We were apart, and I did not think that this was a part of her intentions, but Ji-Hye noona was inadvertently helping me.

Cornering Song Soo-Kyung mentally would make it easier to control him.

The more she got involved, the easier it would be for me to do things.

- Contact the Republic and tell them to take care of the nearby areas. Please tell them that the Continental Protection Management Committee will dispatch an investigation group made up of alchemists or mages rather than priests… Send this information to the adventurers in the area…

-…

- *Whoo…* Please submit the relevant investigation reports as soon as possible.

- And the Sunset Warrior…

- The conversation went well. The mood wasn't all that bad… and we even exchanged messages yesterday. I think he'll contact me either today or tomorrow. I'm sure he'll

mention changes in the formation or conditions, but it won't change much. I might have to prepare a position for him as well. I'll take care of this issue.

- I hope we get good news. The issues recently are…

- Yes, I agree, sir. We've yet to achieve good results.

Song Soo-Kyung looked at his hand mirror and pressed the *Call* button. I'm sure he felt frustrated.

- Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung. It's Song Soo-Kyung of the New Continental Protection Management Committee.

-…

- Mr. Kim Hyun-Sung?

- I transferred all rights to Miss Kim Mi-Young, so please contact her.

- *Ah*, I see. I'm sorry for bothering you.

- It wasn't a bother. Goodbye.

'The Blue Guild is busy as well.'

He closed his eyes briefly to compose himself before contacting Miss Kim Mi-Young. He tried his best to come to an agreement while jotting things down, but there was no way they would come to an agreement through a phone call like this. Not only would they not come to an agreement, but I was also sure that he wouldn't achieve much from this.

Song Soo-Kyung was worried that Kim Hyun-Sung would join the Committee just so he could do whatever he wanted to do. However, Song Soo-Kyung wasn't *that* stupid. He knew this situation was too complicated for him to handle by himself, so he decided to ask for Miss Kim Mi-Young's help.

His decision was in the Blue Guild's favor.

Song Soo-Kyung's plan was to restructure the entire Committee with the Republic and the Union of Kingdoms in the middle of it. Then, he'd change the hero

management system by obtaining the right to command the heroes using the Committee as an excuse.

However, Kim Hyun-Sung wasn't the type to be swayed by public opinion.

The problem was that Kim Hyun-Sung seemed anxious.

I could still remember his conversation with Kim Mi-Young. Fortunately, it wasn't exactly that bad.

"I'd like you to tell me the things that are happening right now. What is the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee? What's going on with Everia? I'd like you to explain to me slowly."

Whenever Kim Hyun-Sung was asked to work, he would go shopping for bags.

Whenever he was told not to work, he would suddenly get the urge to work.

"Also, tell me which direction our guild and I should move… Don't think about my position and just tell me your opinion, Miss Kim Mi-Young."

"Currently, the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee doesn't have a way to deal with the issues. However, every single organization throughout the continent is supporting them, so we cannot ignore them because the Blue Guild is alone."

"Are you saying it would be great if I accept his offer?"

"No, that's…"

"I just thought that perhaps that's what Mr. Ki-Young would want you to do."

"…"

"He had put his life on the line just to protect the continent. I want it to remain intact upon his return. I recall how he laughed when he looked at the World Tree in Everia and called it a 'large tree.' I can't imagine how sad he must've been to learn about the World Tree incident. The tears that the statue had shed… I'm sure that's why the statue was crying. He cried for Everia and the elves who were in pain… He told me he believed in me because he wanted me to take care of this…"

"..."

"That's... also probably the reason he gave Miss Hye-Jin a spear..."

"What?"

"He doesn't want me to carry the burden alone."

Kim Hyun-Sung was so annoying that I wanted to punch him. I found him especially annoying when he laughed mindlessly after coming to that conclusion by himself.

"I think Mr. Ki-Young wanted to tell me that he's always with me. He's probably nervous that I might break down, but he definitely wants me to handle the current situation."

"What do you mean..."

"It's nothing, Miss Kim Mi-Young."

I turned and saw a guild staff talking to Miss Kim Mi-Young.

It seemed that they had found a way to break through, and I had an idea as to what she was thinking as she talked to the staff.

Instead of having the Republic and the Union of Kingdoms lead, she wanted to lead the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee with Kim Hyun-Sung as the key member. If I were in her shoes, I would also think that was the best choice.

The continent could not remain safe just on the revamped Continental Protection Management Committee's influence alone. It made sense that she wanted to make an entire organization using Kim Hyun-Sung.

It wasn't unrealistic either because I could vouch for Miss Kim Mi-Young's skills.

Anyway, the important part was that many different things were stressing out Song Soo-Kyung.

He sighed deeply and put on his helmet before heading toward the Tactical Kim Hyun-Sung training room, but he obviously wasn't focused on his training.

He didn't have the necessary skills to accomplish what he was trying to do here, and

the job change that he had been waiting for wasn't popping up either. He tried to remain calm by humming, but he ended up vomiting and spasming on the ground in pain.

- Shit…

Song Soo-Kyung cursed and threw his helmet, so I had to say something.

"Grab my hand, mortal," I said.

I'd long gotten used to this, as this was something I did on a daily basis.

- *Uh?*

"Grab my hand, mortal. If you do, you'll get what you want," I told him.

- W-Who are you? Who are you?!

"You'll get whatever you want," I repeated.

To be exact, the demon buried inside him was saying these words, but I'm sure he was tempted.

"I'll give you everything you want, you foolish mortal. Now… take my haaaaaaaaand!" I exclaimed, making my voice vibrate at the final syllable.

Villain Song looked around frantically.

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